



T H E  
**D Y S S E Y**  
**N O M E R.**

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Translated by

ALEXANDER POPE, Esq;

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VOLUME THE FOURTH.

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M.DCC.LX.





THE  
FTEENTH BOOK  
OF THE  
DYSSY.



## The A R G U M E N T.

### The Return of *Telemachus*.

**T**HE Goddess Minerva commands Telemachus Vision to return to Ithaca. Pisistratus and b leave of Menelaus, and arrive at Pylos, wher part; and Telemachus sets sail, after having rec board Theoclymenus the Soothsayer. The Sce changes to the Cottage of Eumæus, who entertains with a recital of his adventures. In the mean time machus arrives on the coast, and sending the vesse town, proceeds by himself to the lodge of Eumæus



XVII. P. 38  
THE  
FIFTEENTH BOOK  
OF THE  
ODYSSEY.

**J**ow had *Minerva* reach'd those ample  
plains,  
'd for the dance, where *Menelaius* reigns ;  
ous she flies to great *Ulysses'* heir,  
instant voyage challeng'd all her care

Neither this book, nor indeed some of the following, are reckoned among the most shining parts of the *Odyssey*. They are narrative, and generally low ; yet natural, and just enough, considering *Homer* was resolved to describe and follow life so very minutely. This great Poet here resembles the evening Sun ; he has not the same heat or brightness ; there are several little clouds about him, though in some



Beneath the royal Portico display'd,  
With Nestor's son, *Telemachus* was lay'd;

places gilded and adorned however, - manc us a non  
breaks out again before the conclusion of his course, at  
at last in glory.

There is no doubt, but all the Parts of a Poem are capable of equal lustre; nay, they ought not to dazzle alike, or tire us by a perpetual strain upon the imagination. But in these cooler relations a Translator has a hard task: he is expected to *shine*, where the Author is *not bright*; the unreasonable Critick demands a Copy more noble than the Original. It is true, these are the passages of which we ought to take particular care, and to set them off to the best advantage: but however he may polish a vulgar stone, it still retain its inherent degree of cloudiness; and the most ignorant indeed, who thinks one can make it a Diamond.

The story now turns to *Telemachus*, and the Poet describes his voyage to his country: there is a necessity for conciseness, for the Hero of an Epick Poem is never to be long in sight, after his introduction. The little time that is employed in the return of *Telemachus* is not spent unusefully. During this interval, he learns the state of his father's and domestick affairs from *Eumeus*, and prepares the way for the destruction of the Suitors, the chief design of the whole *Odysssey*. There is another reason why the Poet did not to dwell at large upon the story of *Telemachus*; he had but an incidental relation to the *Odysssey*, and consequently Homer was necessitated to pass over his actions with brevity, that he might describe the Hero of his Poem at full length. It has been objected, that no mention has been made of action at all of *Telemachus* during his whole stay with *Illiustratus*, and that he lies there idly, without making his voice contribute any thing to the restitution of *Ulysses*; but from former observation it is evident, that this silence in the proceedings from judgment; nothing is to be inferred in an Epick Poem but what has some affinity with the main design.



## BOOK xv. HOMER's ODYSSEY. 7

In sleep profound the Son of Nestor lies ;  
Not thine, Ulysses ! Care unseal'd his eyes :

it : but what affinity could the actions of *Telemachus* in the *Spartan* court have with those of *Ulysses*? This would have been to make two Heroes in one Poem, and would have broken the Unity of the Action ; whereas by the contrary conduct *Homer* unites the two stories, and makes the voyage of *Telemachus* subservient to the chief action ; namely, the restitution of *Ulysses*. *Telemachus* undertakes a voyage to make enquiry after *Ulysses* ; this the Poet fully describes, because it has an immediate relation to *Ulysses* ; but passes over all other adventures during the absence of *Telemachus*, because they have no relation to the design.

I know it has been objected, that the whole story of *Telemachus* is foreign to the *Odysssey*, and that the four first books have not a sufficient connexion with the rest of the Poem, and therefore that there is a double action : but this objection will cease, if it be made appear, that this voyage contributes to the restoration of *Ulysses* ; for whatever incident has such an effect, is united to the subject and essential to it. Now that this voyage has such an effect is very evident ; the suitors were ready to seize the throne of *Ulysses*, and compel his wife to marry ; but by this voyage *Telemachus* breaks their whole designs. Instead of usurping the throne, they are obliged to defend themselves : they defer their purpose, and waste much time in endeavouring to intercept him in his return. By this method leisure is gained from the violence and addressess of the suitors, till *Ulysses* returns and brings about his own re-establishment. This voyage therefore is the secret source from which all the happiness of *Ulysses* flows : for had not *Telemachus* sailed to *Pyle*, *Penelope* must have been compelled to marry, and the throne of *Ulysses* usurped. I have been more large upon this objection, because many foreign Criticks lay great weight upon it. See Note on y. 110 of the first book.

There has lately been a great dispute amongst the French, concerning the length of the stay of *Telemachus* from his coun-



## 8 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xv.

Restless he griev'd, with various fears opprest,  
And all thy fortunes roll'd within his breast. 10

try. The debate is not very material, nor is it very difficult to settle that point. *Telemachus* sailed from *Ithaca* in the evening of the second day, and returns to it on the thirty-eighth in the morning, so that he is absent thirty-five days compleatly.

y. i. Now had Minerva, &c.] If this had been related by an Historian, he would have only said that *Telemachus* judged it necessary for his affairs to sail back to his own country; but a Poet steps out of the common beaten road, ascribes the wisdom of that Hero to the Goddess of it, and introduces her in person, to give a dignity to his Poetry.

The Reader may consult in general the extracts from *Bosſu*, (placed before the *Odyſſey*) concerning machines, or the interposition of Deities in Epick Poetry. I will here beg leave to set them in a different and more particular light.

It has been imagined that a Deity is never to be introduced but when all human means are ineffectual: if this were true, *Minerva* would be in vain employed in bringing *Telemachus* back, when a common Messenger might have answered that purpose as well as the Goddess. I doubt not but the verse of *Horace* has led many into this error;

“ *Nec Deus interficit nisi dignus vindice nodus.*”

This rule is to be applied only to the Theatre, of which *Horace* there speaks, and means no more, than when the knot of the Play is to be untied, and no other way is left for making the discovery, then let a God descend and clear the intricacy to the Auditors. But, as Mr. *Dryden* observes, it has no relation to Epick Poetry.

It is true, that a Deity is never to be introduced upon little and unworthy occasions; the very design of Machines is to add weight and dignity to the story, and consequently an unworthy employment defeats the very intent of them, and debases the Deities by making them act in offices unworthy of the characters of divine personages: but then it is as true, that a Poet is at liberty to use them for ornament as well as



## BOOK XV. HOMER'S ODYSSEY.

9

When, O *Telemachus*! (the Goddess said)  
Too long in vain, too widely hast thou stray'd.  
Thus leaving careless thy paternal right  
The robbers prize, the prey to lawless might.  
On fond pursuits neglectful while you roam, 15  
Ev'n now, the hand of Rapine sacks the dome.

necessity. For instance, both *Virgil* and *Homer* in their descriptions of storms introduce Deities, *Neptune* and *Æolus*, only to fill our minds with grandeur and terror; for in reality a storm might have happened without a miracle, and *Eneas* and *Ulysses* both have been driven upon unknown shores, by a common storm as well as by the immediate interposition of *Neptune* or *Æolus*. But machines have a very happy effect; the Poet seems to converse with Gods, gives signs of a divine transport, and distinguishes his Poem in all Parts from an History.

p. 5. *Beneath the royal Portico, &c.] Minerva* here finds *Telemachus* in bed: it is necessary to remember that *Ulysses* landed in *Ithaca* in the morning of the thirty-fifth day; and when *Minerva* left him, she went to the *Spartan* court to *Telemachus*; this vision therefore appears to that Hero in the night following the thirty-fifth day. On the thirty-sixth he departs from *Menelaus*, and lodges that night with *Diocles*; on the thirty-seventh he embarks towards the evening, sails all night, and lands on the thirty-eighth in the morning in his own country. From this observation it is likewise evident, that *Ulysses* passes two days in discourse with *Eumeus*, though the Poet only distinguishes the time by the voyage of *Telemachus*; for the preceding book concludes with the thirty-fifth day, and *Telemachus* spends the thirty-sixth and thirty-seventh and the following night in his return, and meets *Ulysses* in the morning of the thirty-eighth day. This remark is necessary to avoid confusion, and to make the two stories of



## 10 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book x

Hence to *Atrides*; and his leave implore  
To launch thy vessel for thy natal shore;  
Fly, whilst thy Mcther virtuous yet withstands  
Her kindred's wishes, and her Sire's commands; 2c  
Thro' both, *Eurymachus* pursues the dame,  
And with the noblest gifts asserts his claim.

*Ulysses* and *Telemachus* coincide, in this and the next book of the *Odysssey*.

[v. 20. *Her kindred's wishes, and her Sire's commands.*] *Ovid* had these lines in his view in his Epistle of *Penelope* to *Ulysses*.

“ Me pater Icarius viduo decedere lecto  
“ Cogit, & immensas increpat usque moras.”

But why should *Minerva* make use of these arguments, to persuade *Telemachus* to return immediately; and give him no information concerning the safety of *Ulysses*, who was now actually landed in his own country? The Poet reserves this discovery to be made in the future part of the story: if *Telemachus* had known of his father's being already returned, there could have been no room for the beautiful interview between the father and the son; for the doubts and fears, the surprise and filial tenderness, on the part of *Telemachus*; and for the paternal fondness, the yearnings of nature; and the transports of joy, on the part of *Ulysses*. *Aristotle* particularly commends this conduct of *Homer* with respect to *Ulysses*. These disguises and concealments, (says that Author) perplex the fable with agreeable plots and intricacies, surprise us with a variety of incidents, and give room for the relation of many adventures; while *Ulysses* still appears in assumed characters, and upon every occasion recites a new History. At the same time the Poet excellently sustains his character, which is every where distinguished by a wise and ready dissimulation.



## BOOK xv. HOMER's ODYSSEY. II

Hence therefore, while thy stores thy own remain  
Thou know'st the practice of the female train,  
Lost in the children of the present spouse 25  
They flight the pledges of their former vows ;  
Their love is always with the lover past ;  
Still the succeeding flame expells the last.  
Let o'er thy house some chosen maid preside,  
Till heav'n decrees to bless thee in a bride. 30  
But now thy more attentive ears incline,  
Observe the warnings of a pow'r divine :

¶. 24. *Thou know'st the practice of the female train.*] This is not spoken in derogation of *Penelope*, nor applied to her in particular ; it is laid down as an universal maxim, and uttered by the Goddess of wisdom : but (says Madam *Dacier*) I wish the Poet had told us, if the husbands in his days had better memories toward their departed wives. But what advantage would this be to the fair sex, if we allow that an husband may possibly forget a former wife ? I chuse rather to congratulate the modern Ladies, against whom there is not the least objection of this nature. Is it not evident, that all our widows are utterly disconsolate, appear many months in deep mourning ? and whenever they are prevailed upon to a second marriage, do they not chuse out the strongest, best built, and most vigorous youth of the nation ? For what other reason but that such constitutions may be a security against their ever feeling the like calamity again ? What I have here said shews that the world is well changed since the times of *Homer* ; and however the race of man is dwindled and decayed since those ages, yet it is a demonstration that the modern Ladies are not to be lame for it.



12 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xv.

For thee their snares the Suitor Lords shall lay  
In *Samos* sands, or straits of *Ithaca*,  
To seize thy life shall lurk the murd'rous band, 35  
E'er yet thy footsteps press thy native land.  
No —— sooner far their riot and their lust  
All cov'ring earth shall bury deep in dust !  
Then distant from the scatter'd Islands steer,  
Nor let the night retard thy full career ; 40  
Thy heav'nly guardian shall instruct the gales  
To smooth thy passage, and supply thy sails :  
And when at *Ithaca* thy labour ends,  
Send to the town thy vessel with the friends ;  
But seek thou first the Master of the swine, 45  
(For still to thee his loyal thoughts incline)  
There pass the night : while he his course pursues  
To bring *Penelope* the wish'd for news,  
That thou safe sailing from the *Pylian* strand  
Art come to bless her in thy native land. 50

Thus spoke the Goddess, and resum'd her flight  
To the pure regions of eternal light.  
Meanwhile *Pisistratus* he gently shakes,  
And with these words the slumb'ring youth awakes.



BOOK XV. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 13

Rise, son of *Nestor*! for the road prepare, 55  
And join the harness'd coursers to the car.

What cause, he cry'd, can justify our flight,  
To tempt the dangers of forbidding night?  
Here wait we rather, 'till approaching day  
Shall prompt our speed, and point the ready  
way. 60

Nor think of flight before the *Spartan* King  
Shall bid farewell, and bounteous presents bring;  
Gifts, which to distant ages safely stor'd,  
The sacred act of friendship shall record.

Thus he. But when the dawn bestreak'd the  
East, 65

The King from *Helen* rose, and sought his guest.  
As soon as his approach the Hero knew,  
The splendid mantle round him first he threw,  
Then o'er his ample shoulders whirl'd the cloak,  
Respectful met the Monarch, and bespoke. 70

Hail, great *Atrides*, favour'd of high *Jove*!  
Let not thy Friends in vain for licence move.  
Swift let us measure back the wat'ry way,  
Nor check our speed, impatient of delay.



14 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xv.

If with desire so strong thy bosom glows, 75  
 Ill, said the King, shou'd I thy wish oppose ;  
 For oft' in others freely I reprove  
 The ill-tim'd efforts of officious love ;  
 Who love too much, hate in the like extream,  
 And both the golden Mean alike condemn. 80  
 Alike he thwarts the hospitable end,  
 Who drives the free, or stays the hasty friend ;  
 True friendship's laws are by this rule exprest,  
 Welcome the coming, speed the parting guest.  
 Yet stay, my friends, and in your chariot take 85  
 The noblest presents that our love can make :  
 Meantime commit we to our women's care  
 Some choice domestick viands to prepare ;

¶ 84. *Welcome the coming, speed the parting guest.] Homer has here laid together admirable precepts for social life ; the passage was much admired ; Herodotus borrowed it, as we are informed by Eustathius.*

— — — — τραπέζη  
 Μειλίξωτ' ἀπόπεμψαι επὶν οἴδιώσιν νέσος.

But perhaps *Eustathius* quoted by memory, or through inadvertency wrote down *Herodotus* for *Theocritus*, in whom these lines are to be found :

Μηδὲ ξενοδόχον κακὸν ἔμπειται, ἀλλὰ τραπέζη  
 Μειλίξωτ' ἀπόπεμψαι, επὶν οἴδιώσιν νέσος.



BOOK xv. HOMER's ODYSSEY. 15

The trav'ler rising from the banquet gay,  
Eludes the labours of the tedious way. 90

Then if a wider course shall rather please  
Thro' spacious *Argos*, and the Realms of *Greece*,  
*Atrides* in his chariot shall attend ;

Himself thy convoy to each royal friend.

No Prince will let *Ulysses'* heir remove 95  
Without some pledge, some monument of  
love :

These will the Caldron, these the Tripod give, ]  
From those the well-pair'd mules we shall receive, ]  
Or bowl emboss'd whose golden figures live. ]

To whom the Youth, for prudence fam'd,  
reply'd, 100

O Monarch, care of heav'n ! thy people's pride !  
No friend in *Ithaca* my place supplies,  
No pow'rful hands are there, no watchful  
eyes :

My stores expos'd and fenceless house demand  
The speediest succour from my guardian hand; 105  
Left in a search too anxious and too vain  
Of one lost joy, I lose what yet remain.



## 16 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xv.

His purpose when the gen'rous warriour heard,  
He charg'd the houshold cates to be prepar'd.  
Now with the dawn, from his adjoining home, 110  
Was *Boethædes Eteonus* come ;  
Swift as the word he forms the rising blaze,  
And o'er the coals the smoking fragments lays.

\*. 109. *He charg'd the houshold cates to be prepar'd.]* It is in the original, *He commanded Helen and her maids to do it.* The moderns have blamed *Menelaus* for want of delicacy in commanding his Queen to perform such household offices. I read such passages with pleasure, because they are exact pictures of antient life : we may as well condemn the first inhabitants of the world for want of politeness, in living in tents and bowers, and not in palaces. This command of *Menelaus* agrees with those manners, and with the patriarchal life. Gen. xviii. 6. *Abraham hastened into his tent, and said unto Sarah his wife, make ready quickly three measures of fine meal : knead it, and make cakes upon the hearth,*

I doubt not but the continual descriptions of entertainments have likewise given offence to many ; but we may be in some degree reconciled to them, if we consider they are not only instances of the hospitality of the antients, but of their piety and religion : every meal was a religious act, a sacrifice, or a feast of thanksgiving : libations of wine, and offerings of part of the flesh, were constantly made at every entertainment. This gives a dignity to the description, and when we read it, we are not to consider it as an act merely of eating or drinking, but as an office of worship to the Gods.

This is a note of the Criticks ; but perhaps the same thing might as well be said of our modern entertainments, wherever the good practice of saying *Grace* before and after meat is not yet laid aside.



BOOK xv. HOMER's ODYSSEY. 17

Meantime the King, his Son, and *Helen*, went  
Where the rich wardrobe breath'd a costly  
scent. 115

The King selected from the glitt'ring rows  
A bowl ; the Prince a silver beaker chose.  
The beauteous Queen revolv'd with careful eyes  
Her various textures of unnumber'd dies,  
And chose the largest ; with no vulgar art 120  
Her own fair hands embroider'd ev'ry part :  
Beneath the rest it lay divinely bright,  
Like radiant *Hesper* o'er the gems of night.

\*. 123. *Like radiant Hesper o'er the gems of night.*] If this passage were translated literally, it would stand thus, *Helen chose a vesture of most beautiful embroidery, and of the largest extent, a vesture that lay beneath the rest.* We are to understand by the last circumstance, that this vesture was the choicest of her wardrobe, it being reposited with the greatest care, or *μείτης ἀνων*. The verses are taken from *lib. vi.* of the *Iliad*. This robe was the work of *Helen's* own hands ; an instance that in those days a great Lady, or a great Beauty, might be a good workwoman : and she here seems to take particular care to obviate an opinion one might otherwise have, that she did not apply herself to those works till her best days were past. We are told in the *Iliad*,

Her in the Palace, at her loom she found,  
The golden web her own sad story crown'd :  
The *Trojan* wars she weav'd, herself the prize,  
And the dire triumphs of her fatal eyes.



18 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xv.

Then with each gift they hasten'd to their guest,  
And thus the King *Ulysses*' heir addrest. 125

Since fix'd are thy resolves, may thund'ring  
*Jove*

With happiest omens thy desires approve !  
This silver bowl, whose costly margins shine  
Enchas'd with gold, this valu'd gift be thine ;  
To me this present, of *Vulcanian* frame, 130  
From *Sidon*'s hospitable Monarch came ;  
To thee we now confign the precious load,  
The pride of Kings, and labour of a God.

Then gave the cup ; while *Megapenthe* brought  
The silver vase with living sculpture wrought. 135  
The beauteous Queen advancing next, display'd  
The shining veil, and thus endearing said.

Accept, dear youth, this monument of love,  
Long since, in better days, by *Helen* wove :  
Safe in thy mother's care the vesture lay, 140  
To deck thy bride and grace thy nuptial day.  
Meantime may'st thou with happiest speed re-  
gain

Thy stately palace, and thy wide domain



BOOK xv. HOMER's ODYSSEY. 19

She said, and gave the veil ; with grateful look  
The Prince the variegated present took. 145  
And now, when thro' the royal dome they pass'd,  
**H**igh on a throne the King each stranger plac'd.  
**A** golden ew'r th' attendant damsel brings,  
Replete with water from the crystal springs ;  
With copious streams the shining vase supplies 150  
A silver laver of capacious size.  
They wash. The tables in fair order spread,  
The glitt'ring canisters are crown'd with bread ;  
Viands of various kinds allure the taste  
Of choicest sort and favour ; rich repast ! 155  
Whilst *Eteoneus* portions out the shares,  
*Atrides'* son the purple draught prepares.  
And now (each fated with the genial feast,  
And the short rage of thirst and hunger ceast)  
*Ulysses'* son, with his illustrious friend, 160  
The horses join, the polish'd car ascend.  
Along the court the fiery steeds rebound,  
And the wide portal echoes to the sound.  
The king precedes ; a bowl with fragrant wine  
(Libation destin'd to the Pow'rs divine) 165



## 20 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xv.

His right-hand held : before the steeds he stands,  
Then, mix'd with pray'rs, he utters these commands.

Farewell and prosper, youths ! let *Nestor* know  
What grateful thoughts still in this bosom glow,  
For all the proofs of his paternal care, 170  
Thro' the long dangers of the ten years war.  
Ah ! doubt not our report (the Prince rejoyn'd)  
Of all the virtues of thy generous mind.  
And oh ! return'd might we *Ulysses* meet !  
To him thy presents shew, thy words repeat : 175

¶. 174. *And oh ! return'd might we Ulysses meet ! &c.]* It is not impossible but a false reading may have crept into the text in this verse. In the present edition it stands thus.

— — — — αἰ γὰρ ἐγὼν ὡς  
Νοσῆσαις, Ἰθάκην δὲ κιῶν, Οδυσσεῖν εἶχω  
Εἴπομεν. —

The sense will be less intricate, and the construction more easy, if instead of κιῶν we insert κίχων, and read the line thus pointed.

Νοσῆσαις Ἰθάκην δέ, κίχων Οδυσσεῖν εἶχω  
Εἴπομεν.

Then the verse will have this import, “ O may I, upon my return to *Ithaca*, finding *Ulysses* in his Palace, give him an Account of their friendship ! ” whereas in the common editions there is a tautology, and either κιῶν or νοσῆσαις must be allowed to be a superfluity.



BOOK XV. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 21

How will each speech his grateful wonder raise ? .  
How will each gift indulge us in thy praise ?

Scarce ended thus the Prince, when on the right  
Advanc'd the bird of *Jove* : auspicious sight !  
A milk-white fowl his clinching talons bore, 180  
With care domestick pamper'd at the floor.  
Peasants in vain with threat'ning cries pursue,  
In solemn speed the bird majestick flew  
Full dexter to the car : the prosp'rous sight  
Fill'd ev'ry breast with wonder and delight. 185

But *Nestor's* son the chearful silence broke,  
And in these words the *Spartan* chief bespoke.  
Say if to us the Gods these Omens send,  
Or fates peculiar to thyself portend ?

Whilst yet the Monarch paus'd, with doubts  
opprest, 190

The beauteous Queen reliev'd his lab ring breast.

Hear me, she cry'd, to whom the Gods have  
giv'n  
To read this sign, and mystick sense of heav'n.

p. 192. *Hear me, she cry'd, &c.*] It is not clear why the Poet ascribes a greater quickness and penetration to *Helen* in the solution of this prodigy, than to *Menelaus*. Is it, as



22 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xv.

As thus the plamy sov'reign of the air  
Left on the mountain's brow his callow care, 195

*Eustathius* asserts, from a superior acuteness of nature and presence of mind in the fair sex? Or is it, that *Helen* in this resembles some modern beauties, who (though their husbands be asked the question) will make the answer themselves? I would willingly believe that *Helen* might happen to stand in such a position, as to be able to make more minute observation upon the flight of the eagle, than *Menelaus*; and being more circumstantial in the observation, she might for that reason be more ready and circumstantial in the interpretation. But *Homer* himself tells us, that she received it from the Gods. This is a pious lesson, to teach us in general, that all knowledge is the gift of God, and perhaps here particularly inserted to raise the character of *Helen*, and make us less surprised to see her forgiven by *Menelaus*, when she is not only pardoned, but favoured thus with inspiration. And indeed it was necessary to reconcile us to this fatal Beauty; at whom the Reader is naturally enough offended: she is an actress in many of the scenes of the *Odysssey*, and consequently to be redeemed from contempt: this is done by degrees; the Poet steals away the adulteries from our view, to set before us the amiable penitent.

[y. 194. *As thus the plamy sov'reign, &c.*] *Ulysses* is the eagle, the bird represents the suitors: the cries of the men and women when the eagle seized his prey, denote the lamentations of the relations of the suitors, who are slain by *Ulysses*. The circumstance of the flight of the eagle close to the horses, is added to shew that the prodigy had a fixed and certain reference to a person present; namely *Telemachus*: the eagle comes suddenly from a mountain; this means that *Ulysses* shall unexpectedly arrive from the country to the suitors destruction. The fowl is said to be fed by the family, this is a full designation of the suitors, who feed upon *Ulysses*, and prey upon his family. And as this bird is killed by the talons of the eagle, so the suitors fall by the spear of *Ulysses*. *Eustathius*.



BOOK XV. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 23

And wander'd thro' the wide æthereal way  
To pour his wrath on yon' luxurious prey ;  
So shall thy God-like father, toss'd in vain  
Thro' all the dangers of the boundless main,  
Arrive, (or is perchance already come) 200  
From slaughter'd gluttons to release the dome.

Oh ! if this promiss'd bliss by thund'ring *Jove*,  
(The Prince reply'd) stand fix'd in fate above ;  
To thee, as to some God, I'll temples raise,  
And crown thy altars with the costly blaze. 205

He said ; and bending o'er his chariot, flung  
Athwart the fiery steeds the smarting thong ;  
The bounding shafts upon the harness play,  
'Till night descending intercepts the way.

To *Diocleus*, at *Pheræ*, they repair, 210  
Whose boasted Sire was sacred *Alpheus'* heir ;  
With him all night the youthful strangers stay'd,  
Nor found the hospitable rites unpay'd.

But soon as morning from her orient bed  
Had ting'd the mountains with her earliest red, 215  
They join'd the steeds, and on the chariot sprung ;  
The brazen portals in their passage rung.



24 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book xv.

To *Pylos* soon they came ; when thus begun  
To *Nestor's* heir *Ulysses'* God-like son :  
Let not *Pisistratus* in vain be prest, 220  
Nor unconsenting hear his friend's request ;  
His friend by long hereditary claim,  
In toils his equal, and in years the same.  
No farther from our vessel, I implore,  
The couriers drive ; but lash them to the shore. 225  
Too long thy father would his friend detain ;  
I dread his proffer'd kindness, urg'd in vain.

x. 226. *Too long thy father would his friend detain.*] This has been objected against, as contrary to the promise of *Telemachus*, who assured *Menelaus* that he would acquaint *Nestor* with his great friendship and hospitality : is he therefore not guilty of falsehood, by embarking immediately without fulfilling his promise? *Eustathius* answers, that the prodigy of the eagle occasions this alteration, and that the not fulfilling his promise is to be ascribed to accident and necessity. But the words of *Telemachus* sufficiently justify his veracity ; they are of the plural number *καταλέξομεν*, *I and Pisistratus will inform Nestor of your hospitality* : this promise he leaves to be performed by *Pisistratus*, who returns directly to *Nestor*. Others blame *Telemachus* as unpolite, in leaving *Nestor* without any acknowledgment for his civilities. *Dacier* has recourse to the command of *Minerva*, and to the prodigy of the eagle, for his vindication : he is commanded by the Gods to return immediately ; and therefore not blameable for complying with their injunctions. But perhaps it is a better reason to say, that the nature of the Poem requires such a conduct ; the action of the *Odysssey* stands still till the return of *Telemachus*, (whatever



BOOK XV. HOMER's ODYSSEY. 25

The Hero paus'd, and ponder'd this request,  
While love and duty warr'd within his breast.  
At length resolv'd, he turn'd his ready hand, 230  
And lash'd his panting coursers to the strand.  
There, while within the poop with care he stor'd  
The regal presents of the *Spartan* Lord ;  
With speed be gone, (said he) call ev'ry mate,  
E'er yet to *Nestor* I the tale relate : 235  
'Tis true, the fervour of his gen'rous heart  
Brooks no repulse, nor could'st thou soon depart ;  
Himself will seek thee here, nor wilt thou find,  
In words alone, the *Pylian* Monarch kind.  
But when arriv'd he thy return shall know, 240  
How will his breast with honest fury glow ?  
This said, the sounding strokes his horses fire,  
And soon he reach'd the Palace of his Sire.

Now, (cry'd *Telemachus*) with speedy care  
Hoise ev'ry sail, and ev'ry oar prepare. 245  
Swift as the word his willing mates obey,  
And seize their seats, impatient for the sea.

happens to him in *Pyle* being foreign to it) and therefore *Homer* shews his judgment, in precipitating the actions of *Telemachus*, rather than trifling away the time, while the story sleeps, only to shew a piece of complaisance and ceremony.



## 26 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xv.

Meantime the Prince with sacrifice adores  
*Minerva*, and her guardian aid implores ;  
When lo ! a wretch ran breathless to the  
shore, 250

New from his crime, and reeking yet with gore.  
A Seer he was, from great *Melampus* sprung,  
*Melampus*, who in *Pylos* flourish'd long,  
Till urg'd by wrongs a foreign realm he chose,  
Far from the hateful cause of all his woes. 255  
*Neleus* his treasures one long year detains ;  
As long, he groan'd in *Phylacus*'s chains :

¶. 252. — — *From great Melampus sprung.*] There is some obscurity in this genealogical History. *Melampus* was a prophet, he lived in *Pylos*, and was a person of great wealth ; his uncle *Neleus* seized his riches, and detained them a whole year, to oblige him to recover his herds detained by *Iphyclus* in *Phylace* ; he failed in the attempt, and was kept in prison by *Iphyclus*, the son of *Phylacus*. *Bias*, the brother of *Melampus*, was in love with *Pero* the daughter of *Neleus* ; *Neleus*, to engage *Melampus* more strongly in the enterprise, promises to give *Pero* in marriage to his brother *Bias*, upon the recovery of his herds from *Iphyclus*. At length *Iphyclus* releases *Melampus* from prison, upon his discovering to him how he might have an heir to succeed to his dominions, and rewards him with restoring the herds of *Neleus* : then *Neleus* retracts his promise, and refuses to give his daughter *Pero* to *Bias* the brother of *Melampus* ; upon this *Neleus* and *Melampus* quarrel, and engaging in a single combat, *Neleus* is vanquished, and *Melampus* retires to *Argos*. See lib. xi. ¶. 350, &c. and the annotations, Note 23.



BOOK XV. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 27

Meantime, what anguish and what rage, combin'd,

For lovely *Pero* rack'd his lab'ring mind !

Yet 'scap'd he death ; and vengeful of his wrong 260

To *Pylos* drove the lowing herds along :

Then (*Neleus* vanquish'd, and consign'd the Fair

To *Bias'* arms) he sought a foreign air ;

*Argos* the rich for his retreat he chose,

There form'd his empire ; there his palace rose. 265

From him *Antiphates* and *Mantius* came : ]

The first begot *Oiclus* great in fame, ]

And he *Amphiaraus*, immortal name ! ]

The people's Saviour, and divinely wise, ]

Belov'd by *Jove*, and him who gilds the skies, 270 ]

Yet short his date of life ! by female pride he dies. ]

y. 270. Belov'd by Jove, and him who gilds the skies,  
Yet short his date of life ! by female pride he dies.]

The Poet means *Eryphyle*, who, being bribed with a golden bracelet by *Polynices*, persuaded her husband *Amphiaraus* to go to the *Theban war*, where he lost his life. This is a remarkable passage : *Though he was loved by Jupiter and Apollo, yet he reached not to old age.* Is a short life the greatest instance of the love of the Gods ? *Plato* quotes the verse to this purpose.



From *Mantius Clitus*, whom *Aurora's love*  
Snatch'd for his beauty to the thrones above :

" The life of man is so loaded with calamity, that it is an instance of the favour of Heaven to take the burthen from us with speed." The same Author in *Axiochus* (if that dialogue be his) asserts, that the Gods, having a perfect insight into human affairs, take speedily to themselves those whom they love. Thus when *Trophonius* and *Agamedes*, had built a temple to *Apollo*, they prayed to receive a blessing the most beneficial to mankind : the God granted their prayers, and they were both found dead the next morning. Thus likewise the Priests of *Juno*, when her two sons had yoked themselves to her chariot, and drawn her for the greater expedition to the temple, prayed to the Goddess to reward their filial piety ; and they both died that night. This agrees with the expression of *Menander*, He whom the Gods love dies young.

"Οὐ οἱ θεοὶ φιλῶσιν ἀποθνήσκει τίος.

¶. 272. — — — — Aurora's love

*Snatch'd for his beauty to the thrones above.]*

There is nothing more common than such accounts of men being carried away by Goddesses, in all the Greek Poets ; and yet what offends more against credibility ? The Poets invented these fables merely out of compliment to the dead. When any person happened to be drowned in a river ; if a man, some Water Nymph stole him ; if a woman, she was seized to be the wife of the River God. If any were lost at sea, *Neptune* or some of the Sea Gods or Goddesses had taken them to their beds. But to speak to the present purpose ; if any person died in the fields, and his body happened not to be found, if he was murdered and buried, or devoured by wild beasts, so that no Account was heard of his death, he was immediately imagined to be taken from the earth by some Deity who was in love with his beauty. Thus *Clitus* being lost in his morning sports, like *Orion* while he was hunting, he was fabled to be carried to Heaven by *Aurora* ; being lost at the time of the morning, over which that Deity presides.



And *Polyphides* on whom *Phæbus* shone  
With fullest rays, *Amphiaraus* now gone ; 275  
In *Hyperea's* groves he made abode,  
And taught mankind the counsels of the God.  
From him sprung *Theoclymenus*, who found  
(The sacred wine yet foaming on the ground)  
*Telemachus* : whom, as to heav'n he prest 280  
His ardent vows, the stranger thus address.

\*. 278. *From him sprung Theoclymenus —*] We have had a long genealogical digression to introduce *Theoclymenus*: I fear the whole passage will prove distasteful to an *English* palate, it not being capable of any ornaments of Poetry. I could wish *Homer* had omitted or shortened such passages, though they might be useful in his age; for by such honourable insertions he made his court to the best families then in *Greece*. It is true the story is told concisely, and this occasions some obscurity; distance of time as well as place, makes us see all objects somewhat confusedly and indistinctly. In the days of *Homer* these stories were universally known, and consequently wanted no explication; the obscurity therefore is not to be charged upon *Homer*, but to Time, which has defaced and worn away some parts of the impression, and made the image less discernible.

The use the Poet makes of the adventure of *Theoclymenus*, is to give encouragement to *Telemachus*: he assists him with his advice, and by his gift of prophecy explains to him a prodigy in the conclusion of this book. By this method he connects it with the main action, in giving *Telemachus* assurances that his affairs hasten to a re-establishment. Besides these short relations are valuable, as they convey to posterity brief histories of antient facts and families that are extant no where else.



30 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xv.

O thou ! that dost thy happy course prepare  
With pure libations, and with solemn pray'r ;  
By that dread pow'r to whom thy vows are paid ;  
By all the lives of these ; thy own dear head, 285  
Declare sincerely to no foe's demand  
Thy name, thy lineage, and paternal land.

¶. 287. *Declare — thy name, and lineage, &c.]* These questions may be thought somewhat extraordinary ; for what apparent reason is there for this fugitive to be told the name of the parents of *Telemachus*? But the interrogations are very material ; he makes them to learn if *Telemachus* or his father are friends to the person slain, by his hand ? if they were, instead of sailing with him, he would have reason to fly from him, as from a person who might take away his life by the laws of the country. Thus in the *Hebrew law*, Numb. xxxv. 19. *The revenger of blood*, ( $\delta\alpha\lambda\chi\iota\sigma\iota\omega\nu$ , or *propinquus*) *shall slay the murderer, when he meeteth him*. But the *Jews* had cities of refuge, to which the murderers fled as to a sanctuary : the *Greeks* in like manner, if the homicide fled into a voluntary exile, permitted him to be in security till the murder was atoned, either by fulfilling a certain time of banishment, or by a pecuniary mulct or expiation.

I will only further remark the conciseness of these interrogations of *Theoclymenus* ; he asks four questions in a breath, in the compass of one line ; his apprehensions of being pursued give him no leisure to expatiate. *Homer* judiciously adapts his Poetry to the circumstances of the murderer, a man in fear being in great haste to be in security. *Telemachus* answers with equal brevity, being under a necessity to finish his voyage in the night to avoid the ambush of the suitors. For this reason *Homer* shortens the relation, and complies with the exigency of *Telemachus*: with this further view ; to unite the subordinate story of *Telemachus* with that



BOOK XV. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 31

Prepare then, said *Telemachus*, to know  
A tale from falsehood free, not free from woe.  
From *Ithaca*, of royal birth I came, 290  
And great *Ulysses* (ever honour'd name !)  
Was once my Sire : tho' now for ever lost  
In *Stygian* gloom he glides a penfive ghost !  
Whose fate enquiring, thro' the world we  
rove ;

The last, the wretched proof of filial love. 295

The Stranger then. Nor shall I aught con-  
ceal,

But the dire secret of my fate reveal.  
Of my own tribe an *Argive* wretch I flew ;  
Whose pow'rful friends the luckless deed pursue  
With unrelenting rage, and force from home 300  
The blood-stain'd exile, ever doom'd to roam.  
But bear, oh bear me o'er yon' azure flood ;  
Receive the suppliant ! spare my destin'd blood !

Stranger (reply'd the Prince) securely rest  
Affianc'd in our faith ; henceforth our gueſt. 305

of *Ulysses*, it being necessary to hasten to the chief action,  
and without delay carry on the main design of the *Odyſſey* in  
the re-establishment of *Ulysses*.



32 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xv.

Thus affable, *Ulysses'* God-like heir  
Takes from the stranger's hand the glitt'ring  
spear :

He climbs the ship, ascends the stern with haste,  
And by his side the guest accepted plac'd. 309  
The chief his orders gives : th' obedient band  
With due observance wait the chief's command :  
With speed the mast they rear, with speed unbind  
The spacious sheet, and stretch it to the wind.

*Minerva* calls ; the ready gales obey  
With rapid speed to whirl them o'er the sea. 315  
*Crunus* they pass'd, next *Chalcis* roll'd away,  
When thick'ning darkness clos'd the doubtful day ;

\*. 316. *Crunus they pass'd, next Chalcis* — &c.] This whole passage has been greatly corrupted ; one line is omitted in all our editions of *Homer*, and the verses themselves are printed erroneously : for thus they stand, lib. viii. p. 539. of *Strabo's Geography*.

Βᾶ, δὲ παρὰ Κρέτης, καὶ Χαλκίδα παλλιρέθρον,  
Δύσσοντό τ' ἡλιος σκιώντω τι πᾶσαν ἀγνιάτι,  
'Η δὲ Φεας ἐπέβαλλεν ἀγαλλομένη διὸς ὥρᾳ.

The first line is added from *Strabo* : thus in *Latin*,

“ Præterierunt Crunos, & Chalcida fluentis amœnam.”

He writes ἀγαλλομένη for ἐπιγυμνεῖσθαι : and φεας instead of φεα. The course that *Telemachus* steered is thus explained by the same Author : he first sailed northwardly as far as *Elis*, then he turned towards the east, avoiding the direct course to



The silver *Phœa*'s glitt'ring Rills they lost,  
And skimm'd along by *Elis'* sacred coast.  
Then cautious thro' the rocky reaches wind, 320  
And turning sudden, shun the death design'd.

*Ithaca*, to escape the ambush of the suitors, who lay between *Samos* and *Ithaca*. Then he passed the *Echinades* (called Ωοαῖς, that is ἐξιῖαι, or sharp-pointed, by *Homer*. See *Strabo*, lib. x. They are called *Oxias* by *Pliny*) lying near the gulf of *Corinth*, and the mouths of *Achelous*; thus leaving *Ithaca* on the east, and passing it, he alters his course again, sails northwardly between *Ithaca* and *Acarnania*, and lands on the coast opposite to the *Cephalenian* ocean, where the Suitors formed their ambush. The places mentioned by *Homer* lie in this order, *Crundi*, *Chalcis*, and *Phœa*: and are all rivers of small note, or rather brooks, as *Strabo* expresses it: ἀδόξας ποταμῶν ὄντων, μᾶλλος δὲ Ὀχέτων.

It is highly probable that *Phœa*, and not *Pheræ*, is the true reading, for *Pheræ* lay in *Messenia*, and not in *Elis*, as *Strabo* writes, and was in possession of *Agamemnon*; for he mentions that city amongst the seven which he promises *Achilles*, in the ninth book of the *Iliad*.

Sev'n ample Cities shall confess thy sway,  
Thee *Enope*, and *Pheræ* thee obey.

If it had not been under his dominion, how could he transfer the right to *Achilles*? Besides, it would be absurd to join *Pheræ* directly with *Chalcis*, when the one was in *Messenia*, the other in *Elis*; this would make the course of *Telemachus's* Navigation unintelligible, if *Elis* and *Messenia* were confounded in the relation, and used promiscuously without order or regularity.

I will only add that *Strabo* in the xxth book of his *Geography*, instead of Καλλιρέθη, reads κατηρίσαν, perhaps through a slip of his memory.



34 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xv.

Meantime the King, *Eumæus*, and the rest,  
Sat in the Cottage, at their rural feast :  
The banquet past, and satiate ev'ry man,  
To try his host *Ulysses* thus began. 325

Yet one night more, my friends, indulge your  
guest ;  
The last I purpose in your walls to rest :  
To-morrow for myself I must provide,  
And only ask your counsel, and a guide :  
Patient to roam the street, by hunger led, 330  
And bless the friendly hand that gives me bread.  
There in *Ulysses'* roof I may relate  
*Ulysses'* wand'rings to his royal mate ;  
Or mingling with the suitors haughty train,  
Not undeserving, some support obtain. 335

*Hermes* to me his various gifts imparts,  
Patron of industry and manual arts :

\*. 336. *Hermes to me his various gifts imparts,*  
*Patron of industry and manual arts.]*

*Mercury* was the servant and minister of the Gods, and was feigned to be the patron of all persons of the like station upon earth ; it was supposed to be by his favour that all servants and attendants were successful in their several functions. In this view the connexion will be easy. “ I will go (says • *Ulysses*) and offer my service to the Suitors, and by the fa-



BOOK xv. HOMER's ODYSSEY. 35

Few can with me in dext'rous works contend,  
The pyre to build, the stubborn oak to rend ; -

To turn the tasteful viand o'er the flame ; 340  
Or foam the goblet with a purple stream.

Such are the tasks of men of mean estate,  
Whom Fortune dooms to serve the rich and  
great.

Alas ! (*Eumeus* with a sigh rejoin'd)

How sprung a thought so monstrous in thy  
mind ? 345

If on that God-less race thou wouldest attend,  
Fate owes thee sure a miserable end !

" your of *Mercury* who gives success to persons of my condition, shall prosper ; for no man is better able to execute the offices of attendance, than myself." It may be objected, that these functions are unworthy of the character, and beneath the dignity of an Hero ; but *Ulysses* is obliged to act in his assumed, not real character ; as a beggar, not as a King. *Athenaeus* (lib. i. p. 18.) vindicates *Ulysses* in another manner. " Men (says he) in former ages performed their own offices, and gloried in their dexterity in such employments. Thus *Homer* describes *Ulysses* as the most dexterous man living, in ordering wood for the fire, and in the arts of cookery." But it is no more derogation to him to put on the appearance of a beggar, than it was to *Pallas* to assume that of a swain, as she frequently does throughout the *Odyssy*.



36 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book x.

Their wrongs and blasphemies ascend the sky,  
And pull descending vengeance from on high;  
Not such, my friend, the servants of their  
feast ;

350

A blooming train in rich embroid'ry drest,  
With earth's whole tribute the bright table bends,  
**A**nd smiling round celestial Youth attends.

Stay then : no eye askance beholds thee here ;  
Sweet is thy converse to each social ear ;      355  
Well pleas'd, and pleasing, in our cottage rest,  
'Til good *Telemachus* accepts his guest  
With genial gifts, and change of fair attires,  
And safe conveys thee where thy soul desires.

To him the man of woes. O gracious  
Jove !

360

Reward this stranger's hospitable love,

¶. 348. *Their wrongs and blasphemies ascend the sky.]* The sense of this passage appears to me very obvious; *Dacier* renders it, *whose violence and insolence is so great that they regard not the Gods, and that they attack even the heavens.* I should rather chuse to understand the words in the more plain and easy construction: *Grotius* is of this judgment, and thinks they bear the same import as these in Gen. xviii. 21. *I will go down and see if they have done according to the cry which is come unto heaven;* and indeed there is a great similitude between the expressions.



BOOK XV. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 37

Who knows the son of sorrow to relieve,  
Chears the sad heart, nor lets affliction grieve.  
Of all the ills unhappy mortals know,  
A life of wand'rings is the greatest woe : 365  
On all their weary ways wait Care and Pain,  
And Pine and Penury, a meagre train.  
To such a man since harbour you afford,  
Relate the farther fortunes of your Lord ;  
What cares his Mother's tender breast engage, 370  
And Sire, forsaken on the verge of age ;

[v. 370. *What cares his Mother's tender breast engage,*  
*And Sire, forsaken on the verge of age.*]

These questions may seem to be needless, because *Ulysses* had been fully acquainted with the story of *Laertes*, and the death of his mother *Anticlea*, by the shade of *Tiresias*; but *Ulysses* personates a stranger, and to carry on that character, pretends to be unacquainted with all the affairs of his own family. I cannot affirm that such frequent repetitions of the same circumstances are beautiful in *Homer*; the retirement of *Laertes* has been frequently mentioned, and the death of *Anticlea* related in other parts of the *Odyssy*; however necessary such reiterated accounts may be, I much question whether they will prove entertaining; *Homer* himself in this place seems to apprehend it, for *Eumeus* passes over the questions made by *Ulysses* with a very short answer, and enlarges upon other circumstances, relating to his family and affairs, to give (as *Eustathius* observes) variety to his Poetry. But this conduct is very judicious upon another account: it lets *Ulysses* into the Knowledge of his condition, and by it he is able to take his measures with the greater certainty, in order to bring about



38 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xv.

Beneath the sun prolong they yet their breath,  
Or range the house of darkness and of death ?

To whom the swain. Attend what you enquire,  
*Laertes* lives, the miserable sire,

375

Lives, but implores of ev'ry pow'r to lay  
The burden down, and wishes for the day.

Torn from his offspring in the eve of life,  
Torn from th' embraces of his tender wife,

Sole, and all comfortless, he wastes away      380  
Old age, untimely posting ere his day.

She too, sad Mother ! for *Ulysses* lost  
Pin'd out her bloom, and vanish'd to a ghost.

(So dire a fate, ye righteous Gods ! avert,  
From ev'ry friendly, ev'ry feeling heart !)      385

While yet she was, tho' clouded o'er with grief,  
Her pleasing converse minister'd relief :

With *Ctimene*, her youngest daughter, bred,  
One roof contain'd us, and one table fed.

his own re-establishment. This is a demonstration that the objection of *Rapin* is without foundation ; he calls these interviews between *Ulysses* and *Eumeus* mere idle fables, invented solely for amusement, and contributing nothing to the action of the *Odysssey* ; but the contrary is true, for *Ulysses* directs his course according to these informations.



BOOK XV. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 39

But when the softly-stealing pace of time 390

Crept on from childhood into youthful prime,

To Samos' Isle she sent the wedded fair;

Me to the fields, to tend the rural care;

Array'd in garments her own hands had wove,

Nor less the darling object of her love. 395

Her hapless death my brighter days o'ercast,

Yet providence deserts me not at last;

My present labours food and drink procure,

And more, the pleasure to relieve the poor.

Small is the comfort from the Queen to hear 400

Unwelcome news, or vex the royal ear;

\*. 399. *And more, the pleasure to relieve the poor.*] This verse,  
τῶν ἐπαγόντων, επιόντε, καὶ αἰδοῖον ἔδωκε.

has been traduced into the utmost obscenity; *Eustathius* vindicates the expression: it means, “I have sustained myself “ with meat and drink by an honest industry, and have got “ wherewithal to relieve virtue that wants.” He interprets αἰδοῖον, by ἀρδάσσων αἰδεῖς αξίους, or, men worthy of regard and honour: ξένοις καὶ λιτέταις. The following words,

— — Οὐ μείλιχόν εἰσιν ἀκεῖσται  
Οὔτ' επος, οὔτε τι ἐγος — —

are capable of a double construction, and imply either that I take no delight in hearing of Penelope, *sbe being in distress, and in the power of the suitors*; or that the suitors so besiege the palace, that it is impossible for me to hear one gentle word from Penelope, or receive one obliging action from her hand. The preference is submitted to the Reader's judgment; they both contain images of tenderness and humanity.



40 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xv.

Blank and disountenanc'd the servants stand,  
Nor dare to question where the proud command :  
No profit springs beneath usurping pow'rs ;  
Want feeds not there, where luxury devours, 405  
Nor harbours Charity where Riot reigns :  
Proud are the lords, and wretched are the swains.

The suff'ring chief at this began to melt ;  
And, oh *Eumeus* ! thou (he cries) hast felt  
The spite of fortune too ! her cruel hand 410  
Snatch'd thee an infant from thy native land !  
Snatch'd from thy parents arms, thy parents eyes,  
To early wants ! a man of miseries !  
Thy whole sad story, from its first, declare :  
Sunk the fair City by the rage of war, 415  
Where once thy parents dwelt ? or did they keep,  
In humbler life, the lowing herds and sheep ?  
So left perhaps to tend the fleecy train,  
Rude Pirates seiz'd, and shipp'd thee o'er the main ?  
Doom'd a fair prize to grace some Prince's board,  
The worthy purchase of a foreign lord. 421

If then my fortunes can delight my friend,  
A story fruitful of events, attend :



## BOOK XV. HOMER's ODYSSEY. 41

Another's sorrow may thy ear enjoy,  
And wine the lengthen'd intervals employ. 425  
Long nights the now declining year bestows ;  
A part we consecrate to soft repose,  
A part in pleasing talk we entertain ;  
For too much rest itself becomes a pain.  
Let those, whom sleep invites, the call obey, 430  
Their cares resuming with the dawning day :  
Here let us feast, and to the feast be join'd  
Discourse, the sweeter banquet of the mind ;  
Review the series of our lives, and taste  
The melancholy joy of evils past : 435

\*. 426. *Long nights the now declining year bestows, &c.]* From hence we may conclude, that the return of *Ulysses* was probably in the decline of the year, in the latter part of the autumn, and not in the summer ; the nights then being short cannot be called Νύκτες ἀθησφατται. *Eustathius.*

\*. 429. — *Too much rest itself becomes a pain.]* This aphorism is agreeable to nature and experience ; the same thing is asserted by *Hippocrates*, *Sleep or watchfulness, when excessive, become diseases* ; too much sleep occasions an excess of perspiration, and consequently weakens and dissipates the animal spirits. *Dacier*

\*. 434. — — — — — *and taste*  
*The melancholy joy of evils past.]*

There is undoubtedly a great pleasure in the remembrance of past sufferings : nay, calamity has this advantage over prosperity ; an evil when past turns into a comfort ; but a past



## 42 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xv.

For he who much has suffer'd, much will  
know;

And pleas'd remembrance builds delight on woe.

Above *Ortygia* lies an Isle of fame,  
Far hence remote, and *Syria* is the name;  
(There curious eyes inscrib'd with wonder trace  
The Sun's diurnal, and his annual race)      441

pleasure though innocent, leaves in its room an anxiety for the want of it, and if it be a guilty pleasure, a remorse. The reason (observes *Eustathius*) why past evils delight, is from the consciousness of the praise due to our prudence, and patience under them, from the sense of our felicity in being delivered from them, and from gratitude to divine providence, which has delivered us. It is the joy of good men to believe themselves the favourites of Heaven.

\*. 438. *Ortygia.*] This is an ancient name of *Delos*, so called from ὄπτεξ, a *Quail*, from the great numbers of those birds found upon that island. *Lycophron*, in his obscure way of writing, calls it ὄπτεξ πλευρίν or the *winged Quail*; perhaps from the fable of *Asteria* being turned into that bird in her flight from *Jupiter*, and giving name to the Island from the transformation she suffered upon it. It is one of the *Cyclades*, and lies in the *Ægean* ocean. *Syria*, or *Syros*, is another small Island lying eastward of *Ithaca*, according to true Geography.

\*. 440. *There curious eyes inscrib'd with wonder trace  
The Sun's diurnal, and his annual race.]*

The words in *Homer.* are τροπαι μέλισσα, or *solis conversiones*. Monsieur *Perault* insults the Poet as ignorant of Geography, for placing *Syros* under the *Tropic*; an error (says he) which Commentators in vain have laboured to defend, by having recourse to a Sun-dial of *Pherecydes* on which the motions of



## BOOK XV. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 43

Not large, but fruitful; stor'd with grass to  
keep

The bellowing oxen, and the bleating sheep;

the Sun (the τροπαὶ ἡλίου) were designed. The last defence would indeed be ridiculous, since *Pherecydes* flourished three hundred years after the time of *Homer*: no one (replies Monsieur *Boileau*) was ever at any difficulty about the sense of this passage; *Eustathius* proves that τριπτοσθαῖ signifies the same as δένει, and denotes the setting of the Sun; so that the words mean, that *Syros* is situate above *Ortygia*, on that side where the Sun sets, or westerly, πρὸς τὰ δυτικὰ μέση τῆς Ὁρτυγίας. It is true, *Eustathius* mentions a bower, Σπήλαιον, in which the conversions of the Sun were figured. This indeed would fully vindicate *Homer*; but *Bochart* and others affirm, that *Eustathius* is in an error, and that *Syros* is so far from lying to the west, or πρὸς τροπὰς ἡλίου, that it bears an eastern position both with respect to *Ithaca* and *Delos*: how is this objection to be answered? *Bochart*, p. 411. of his *Geographia sacra*, explains it by having recourse to the bower mentioned by *Eustathius*, in which the motions of the Sun were drawn. *Pherecydes* (says *Hesychius Milesius*) having collected the writings of the *Phœnicians*, from the use of them alone without any instructor, became famous in the world by the strength of his own genius: and *Laertius* writes, that an *Heliotrope* made by him was preserved in the Island of *Syros*. Thus it is evident, that he borrowed his knowledge from the *Phœnicians*, and probably his skill in Astronomy, they being very expert in that science, by reason of its use in their navigation. Why then might there not be a machine which exhibited the motions of the Sun, made by the *Phœnicians*, and why might not *Homer* be acquainted with it? It is probable that *Pherecydes* took his pattern from this *Heliotrope*, which being one of the greatest rarities of antiquity, might give a great reputation to *Syros*, and consequently was worthy to be celebrated by *Homer*, the great preserver of Antiquities. *Fallitur igitur*, (says *Bochart*) *Eus-*



## 44 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xv.

Her sloping hills the mantling vines adorn,  
And her rich valleys wave with golden corn. 445

*ſtathius, cum vult intelligi, quaſi ſita ſit Syrus ad occiduas partes Deli; cum contra Deli ad ortum ſit Syrus, non ad occafum; & rem ſic ſe habere ex ipſo Homero patet, apud quem Eumæus in Ithacâ, Syriam afferit eſſe trans Delum, quo nihil dici potuit falſius, ſi Syrus ſit ad occafum Deli.* If this answer appears to any person too studied and abſtruse, the difficulty may be ſolved, by ſuppoſing Eumæus ſpeaking of *Delos*, as it lay with reſpect to *Syrus*, before he was carried from it; for instance, if *Syrus* lies on the eaſt of *Delos* to a man in *Ithaca*, both *Ithaca* and *Delos* will lie on the weſt of *Syrus* to one of that Island; I would therefore imagine that *Eumæus* ſpeaks as a native of *Syrus*, and not as a ſojourner in *Ithaca*, and then *Delos* will lie towards the ſun-ſetting, or πρὸς ἡλίῳ τροπάς: but this laſt I only propose as a conjecture, not preſuming to offer it as a decision.

[v. 442. *Not large, but fruitful; ſir'd with graſs to keep  
The bellwing oxen, and the bleating ſheep.*] ]

It is probable that *Homer* was well acquainted with the na-  
ture of this Island, and that it really enjoyed an admirable  
temperature of air; and therefore was exceedingly healthful;  
the fertility of the ſoil proves the happiness of the air, which  
would naturally free the inhabitants from the maladies arising  
from a leſs ſalubrious ſituation. It is for this reaſon that they  
are to be ſlain by *Diana* and *Apollo*. All deaths that were  
ſudden, and without ſickneſs, were ascribed to thoſe Deities.  
*Bochart* (p. 410.) tells us, that the name of *Syros* was given  
to the Island by the *Phœnicians*; *Aſira* or *Sira* ſignifying *rich*,  
in their language; or rather it was ſo called from *Sura*, or  
*Aſura*, ſignifying *happy*; either of these derivations fully de-  
note the excellence both of the ſoil and air: and that this  
name is of *Phœnician* extract is probable from the words of  
*Homer*, who assures us that they ſtayed a whole year upon this  
Island, and conſequently had opportunity to know the health-  
fulness and fertility of it.



BOOK XV. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 45

No want, no famine the glad natives know,  
Nor sunk by sickness to the shades below ;  
But when a length of years unnerves the  
strong,

*Apollo* comes, and *Cynthia* comes along.

They bend the silver bow with tender skill, 450

And void of pain, the silent arrows kill.

Two equal tribes this fertile land divide,

Where two fair cities rise with equal pride.

But both in constant peace one Prince obey,

And *Ctesius* there, my father, holds the sway. 455

Freighted, it seems, with toys of ev'ry sort

A ship of *Sidon* anchor'd in our port ;

\*. 457. *A ship of Sidon* ——] Here is a full testimony, that the *Phœnicians* were remarkable for arts and navigation over all the old world. They were expelled from their country by *Joshua*, (as *Bochart* informs us) and then settling along the sea-coasts, they spread over all the *Mediterranean*, and by degrees sent out Colonies into *Europe*, *Asia*, and *Africk*; that they were in *Africk* appears from *Procopius*, where he mentions a pillar with a *Phœnician* inscription. Ἡμῖν ἵσμεν οἱ φύγοντες ἀπὸ πρεσβύτερος Ἰησοῦ τῆς ληστῆς νήσου Νάμ; that is, *We are a people that fly from Joshua the son of Nun, the robber*; they gave him that title out of resentment for their dispossession. The character they bear in the Scriptures agrees with this in *Homer*. *Isaiah xxiii. 2. The Merchants of Sidon, that pass over the seas*; and it likewise appears from the Scriptures, that they excelled in all arts of embroidery, and works of curiosity.



46 HOMER's ODYSSEY. BOOK xv.

What-time it chanc'd the palace entertain'd,  
Skill'd in rich works, a woman of their land :  
This nymph, where anchor'd the *Phænician*  
train

460

To wash her robes descending to the main,  
A smooth-tongu'd sailor won her to his mind ;  
(For Love deceives the best of woman-kind.)  
A sudden trust from sudden liking grew ;  
She told her name, her race, and all she knew.

\* 458. *What-time it chanc'd the palace entertain'd,  
Skill'd in rich works, a woman of their land.]*

I was surprised to find that *Eustathius* mistook this *Phænician* woman for the mother of *Eumeus*; she herself tells us, that she was only his Governess.

Παῖδες γὰρ ἀνδρὸς εἴησθε· οὐ μεγάροις ἀτιτάλλετε.

It is not probable that *Eumeus* would have painted his own mother in the dress of an adulteress, and an abandoned traitress: nay, he directly distinguishes his mother from this *Phænician* in the sequel of the story (where he calls her πότνια μήτηρ, or his venerable mother) and when he speaks of the *Phænician*, he constantly calls her γυνὴ, not μήτηρ. Nor indeed could he have called her πότνια at all, if she had been a person of such a detestable character. *Spondanus* adopts the mistake of *Eustathius*, and endeavours to vindicate her from the manner of her frailty. *Modeste decepta donis, &c. ut eorum libidini obsecundaret,* “ it was a modest adultery, she being deceived “ by bribes to yield to their solicitation.” However erroneous this opinion is, yet it shews *Spondanus* to be a kind and complaisant Casuist.



BOOK XV. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 47

I too (she cry'd) from glorious *Sidon* came, 466  
My father *Arybas*, of wealthy fame ;  
But snatch'd by pirates from my native place,  
The *Taphians* sold me to this man's embrace.

Haste then (the false designing youth re-  
ply'd) 470

Haste to thy country ; love shall be thy guide ;  
Haste to thy father's house, thy father's breast,  
For still he lives, and lives with riches blest.

“ Swear first (she cry'd) ye sailors ! to restore ]  
“ A wretch in safety to her native shore.” 475 }  
Swift as she ask'd, the ready sailors swore. ]

She then proceeds : Now let our compact made  
Be nor by signal nor by word betray'd,  
Nor near me any of your crew descry'd  
By road frequented, or by fountain side. 480

Be Silence still our guard. The Monarch's spies  
(For watchful Age is ready to surmise)

Are still at hand ; and this, reveal'd, must be  
Death to yourselves, eternal chains to me.  
Your vessel loaded, and your traffick past, 485  
Dispatch a wary messenger with haste :



48 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xv.

Then gold and costly treasures will I bring,  
And more, the infant-offspring of the King  
Him, child-like wand'ring forth, I'll lead away,  
(A noble prize !) and to your ship convey. 490

Thus spoke the dame, and homeward took the road.

A year they traffick, and their vessel load  
Their stores compleat, and ready now to weigh,  
A spy was sent their summons to convey :  
An artist to my father's palace came, 495  
With gold and amber chains, elab'rare frame :  
Each female eye the glitt'ring links employ,  
They turn, review, and cheapen ev'ry toy.  
He took th' occasion as they stood intent,  
Gave her the sign, and to his vessel went. 500  
She straight pursu'd, and seiz'd my willing arm :  
I follow'd smiling, innocent of harm.

*y. 502. I followed smiling, innocent of harm.]* There is a little incredibility in this narration ; for if *Eumeus* was such an infant as he is described to be at the time when he was betrayed by his *Phœnician* Governess, what probability is there that he should be able to retain all these particulars so circumstantially ? He was not of an age capable of making, or remembering so many observations. The answer is, that he afterwards learned them from *Laertes*, who bought him of the



BOOK XV. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 49

Three golden goblets in the porch she found,  
(The guests not enter'd, but the table crown'd)  
Hid in her fraudulent bosom, these she bore: 505  
Now set the sun, and darken'd all the shore.  
Arriving then, where tilting on the tides  
Prepar'd to lanch the freighted vessel rides;  
Aboard they heave us, mount their decks, and sweep  
With level oar along the glassy deep. 510  
Six calm days and six smooth nights we sail,  
And constant Jove supply'd the gentle gale.  
The seventh, the fraudulent wretch, (no cause  
descry'd)

Touch'd by *Diana's* vengeful arrow dy'd. 514

*Phænicians*: and no doubt they told him the quality of *Eumæus*, to enhance the Price and make the better bargain. It is also natural to imagine, that *Eumæus*, when he grew up to manhood, would be inquisitive after his own birth and fortunes, and therefore might probably learn these particulars from *Laertes*. *Eustathius*.

¶. 511. *Six calm days, &c.*] It is evident from this passage, that it is above six days sail from *Ithaca* to *Syros*, though carried with favourable winds. *Dacier*.

¶. 514. —— *Diana's vengeful arrow* ——] I would just observe the poetical justice of *Homer*, in the punishment of this *Phænician*. Misfortune generally pursues wickedness, and though we escape the vengeance of man, yet heaven frequently overtakes us when we think we are in security, and death calls us from our impious acquisitions.



50 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xv.

Down dropt the caitiff-corse, a worthless load,  
Down to the deep ; there roll'd, the future food  
Of fierce sea-wolves, and monsters of the flood.]  
An helpless infant, I remain'd behind ;  
Thence borne to *Itaca* by wave and wind ;  
Sold to *Laertes*, by divine command,      520  
And now adopted to a foreign land.

To him the King. Reciting thus thy cares,  
My secret soul in all thy sorrows shares :  
But one choice blessing (such is Jove's high  
will)

Has sweeten'd all thy bitter draught of ill : 525  
Torn from thy country to no hapless end,  
The Gods have, in a master, giv'n a friend.

\*. 521. *And now adopted to a foreign land.*] Homer has here given us an History of the life of *Eumeus*; the Episode contains near an hundred lines, and may seem entirely foreign to the action of the *Odyssey*. I will not affirm that it is in every respect to be justified. The main story is at a stand; but we are to consider that this relation takes up but small part of one leisure evening, and that the action cannot proceed till the return of *Telemachus*. It is of use to set off the character of *Eumeus*, and shew him to be a person of quality, worthy to be an agent in an Epick Poem, where every character ought to be remote from meanness: so the story has a distant relation to the *Odyssey*, and perhaps is not to be looked upon merely as an excrescence from the main building, but a small projection to adorn it.



BOOK xv. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 51

Whatever frugal nature needs is thine,  
(For she needs little) daily bread and wine.

While I, so many wand'rings past and woes, 530  
Live but on what thy poverty bestows.

So past in pleasing dialogue away  
The night ; then down to short repose they lay ; }  
'Till radiant rose the messenger of day. }

While in the port of *Ithaca*, the band 535  
Of young *Telemachus* approach'd the land ;  
Their sails they loos'd, they lash'd the mast  
aside,

And cast their anchors, and the cables ty'd :  
Then on the breezy shore descending join  
In grateful banquet o'er the rosy wine. 540

\*. 534. '*Till radiant rose the messenger of day.*'] This is the morning of the thirty-eighth day since the beginning of the *Odyssey*. It is observable that *Telemachus* takes more time in his return from *Pylos*, than in sailing thither from his own country ; for in the latter end of the second book he sets sail after sun-setting, and reached *Pyle* in the morning : here he embarks in the afternoon, and yet arrives not at *Ithaca* till after break of day. The reason of it is not to be ascribed to a less prosperous wind, but to the greater compass he was obliged to fetch, to escape the ambush of the suitors. In the former voyage he steered a direct course ; in this he sails round about to the north of *Ithaca*, and therefore wastes more time in his voyage to it.



52 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xv.

When thus the Prince: Now each his course  
pursue;

I to the fields, and to the city you.

Long absent hence, I dedicate this day

My swains to visit, and the works survey.

Expect me with the morn, to pay the skies 545

Our debt of safe return, in feast and sacrifice.

Then *Theoclymenus*. But who shall lend,  
Meantime, protection to thy stranger-friend ?  
Straight to the Queen and Palace shall I fly,  
Or yet more distant, to some Lord apply ? 550

The Prince return'd. Renown'd in days of  
yore

Has stood our Father's hospitable door ;  
No other roof a stranger shou'd receive,  
Nor other hands than ours the welcome give.

But in my absence riot fills the place, 555

Nor bears the modest Queen a stranger's face,  
From noiseful revel far remote she flies,  
But rarely seen, or seen with weeping eyes.

No —— let *Eurytmachus* receive my guest,  
Of nature courteous, and by far the best ; 560



## BOOK xv. HOMER's ODYSSEY. 53

He wooes the Queen with more respectful flame,  
And emulates her former husband's fame :  
With what success, 'tis Jove's alone to know,  
And the hop'd nuptials turn to joy or woe.

Thus speaking, on the right up-soar'd in air  
The hawk, Apollo's swift-wing'd messenger ; 566

*v. 561. He wooes the Queen with more respectful flame,  
And emulates her former husband's fame.]*

The words in the original are ἀδοστὸν γῆρας ἐξειρήνη, which may either be rendered, *to obtain the honour of marrying Penelope*, agreeably to the former part of the verse ; or it means that *Eurymachus* has the fairest hopes to marry *Penelope*, and *obtain the throne or γῆρας of Ulysses*. *Hobbs* translates the verse almost obscenely in the former sense :

— — — He best loves my mother ;  
And what my father did, would do the same.

The former in my judgment is the better construction, especially because it avoids a tautology, and gives a new image in the second part of the verse, very different from the sense expressed in the former part of it. But of all the meanings it is capable of I should prefer this ; “ That he courts her upon “ the most honourable principles, and seems desirous to have “ the honour of *Ulysses*, by imitating his worth : ” and this is agreeable to the character of *Eurymachus*, which distinguishes him from all the other Suitors.

*v. 566. The hawk, Apollo's swift-wing'd messenger.]* The Augury is thus to be interpreted ; *Ulysses* is the hawk, the Suitors the pigeon ; the hawk denotes the valour of *Ulysses*, being a bird of prey ; the pigeon represents the cowardice of the Suitors, that bird being remarkable for her timorous nature. The hawk flies on the right, to denote success to *Ulysses*.



## 54 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xv.

His deathful pounces tore a trembling dove ;  
The clotted feathers, scatter'd from above,  
Between the Hero and the Vessel pour      569  
Thick plumage, mingled with a sanguine show'r.

Th' observing Augur took the Prince aside,  
Seiz'd by the hand, and thus prophetick cry'd.  
Yon' bird that dexter cuts th' aerial road,  
Rose ominous, nor flies without a God :  
No race but thine shall *Ithaca* obey,      575  
To thine, for ages, heav'n decrees the sway.

*Homer* calls this bird the Messenger of *Apollo*; not that this augury was sent by that Deity, (though that be no forced interpretation) but the expression implies, that the hawk was sacred to *Apollo*; as the peacock was to *Juno*, the owl to *Pallas*, and the eagle to *Jupiter*. Thus *Ælian*, *anim. lib. x. c. 14.* Αἰγαῖοις τὸν ἤερα τῷ Ἀπόλλωνι τιμῆσιν εἰκάστι, &c. and he gives the reason of it, for the hawk is the only bird that is capable to bear the lustre of the Sun without inconvenience and difficulty; the same is said of the eagle, but this hawk is reckoned to be of the *Aquiline* kind. It was death among the *Ægyptians* to kill this bird, because it was dedicated to *Apollo*.

There is another reason why any bird that was taken notice of by way of augury, may be said to be the messenger of *Apollo*, that Deity presiding over divination.

¶. 571. Th' observing Augur took the Prince aside.] The reason why *Theoclymenus* withdraws *Telemachus*, while he interprets the Augury, is not apparent at the first view, but he does it out of an apprehension lest he should be overheard by some of the company, who might disclose the secret to the Suitors, and such a discovery might prove fatal to his own person, or to the fortunes of *Telemachus*. *Eustathius.*



BOOK xv. HOMER's ODYSSEY. 55

Succeed the Omen, Gods ! (the youth rejoin'd)  
Soon shall my bounties speak a grateful mind,  
And soon each envy'd happiness attend  
The man, who calls *Telemachus* his friend. 580  
Then to *Peiræus* —— Thou whom time has  
prov'd

A faithful servant, by thy Prince belov'd !  
'Till we returning shall our guest demand,  
Accept this charge with honour, at our hand.

To this *Peiræus*; Joyful I obey, 585  
Well pleas'd the hospitable rites to pay.  
The presence of thy guest shall best reward  
(If long thy stay) the absence of my Lord.

\*. 581. *Then to Peiræus —— Thou whom time has prov'd,*  
&c.] We find that *Telemachus* intended to deliver *Theoclymenus*  
to the care of *Eurymachus*: what then is the reason why he  
thus suddenly alters that resolution, and intrusts him to *Pei-  
ræus*? This is occasioned by the discovery of the skill of *Theo-  
clymenus* in Augury: he fears lest the Suitors should extort  
some prediction from him that might be detrimental to his  
affairs, or should he refuse it, to the person of *Theoclymenus*.  
*Eustathius.*

This book comprehends somewhat more than the space of  
two days and one night; for the vision appears to *Telemachus*  
a little before the dawn, in the night preceding the thirty-  
sixth day, and he lands in *Ithaca*, on the thirty-eighth in the  
morning.



56 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xv.

With that, their anchors he commands to weigh,

Mount the tall bark and lanch into the sea. 590

All with obedient haste forsake the shores,

And plac'd in order, spread their equal oars.

Then from the deck the Prince his sandals takes ;

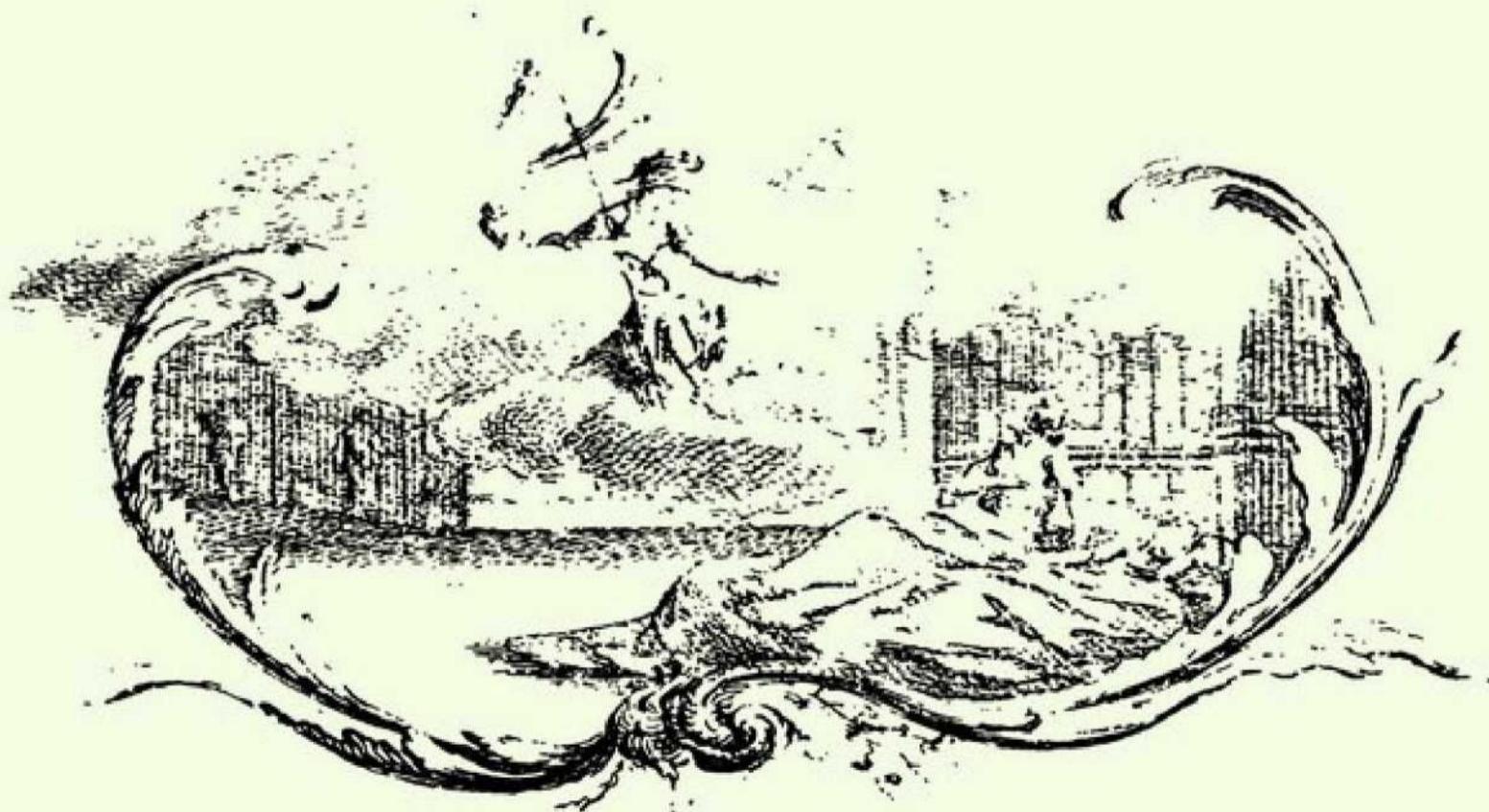
Pois'd in his hand the pointed jav'lin shakes. 594

They part ; while less'ning from the Hero's view,

Swift to the town the well-row'd galley flew :

The Hero trod the margin of the main,

And reach'd the mansion of his faithful swain.





THE  
SIXTEENTH BOOK  
OF THE  
ODYSSEY.

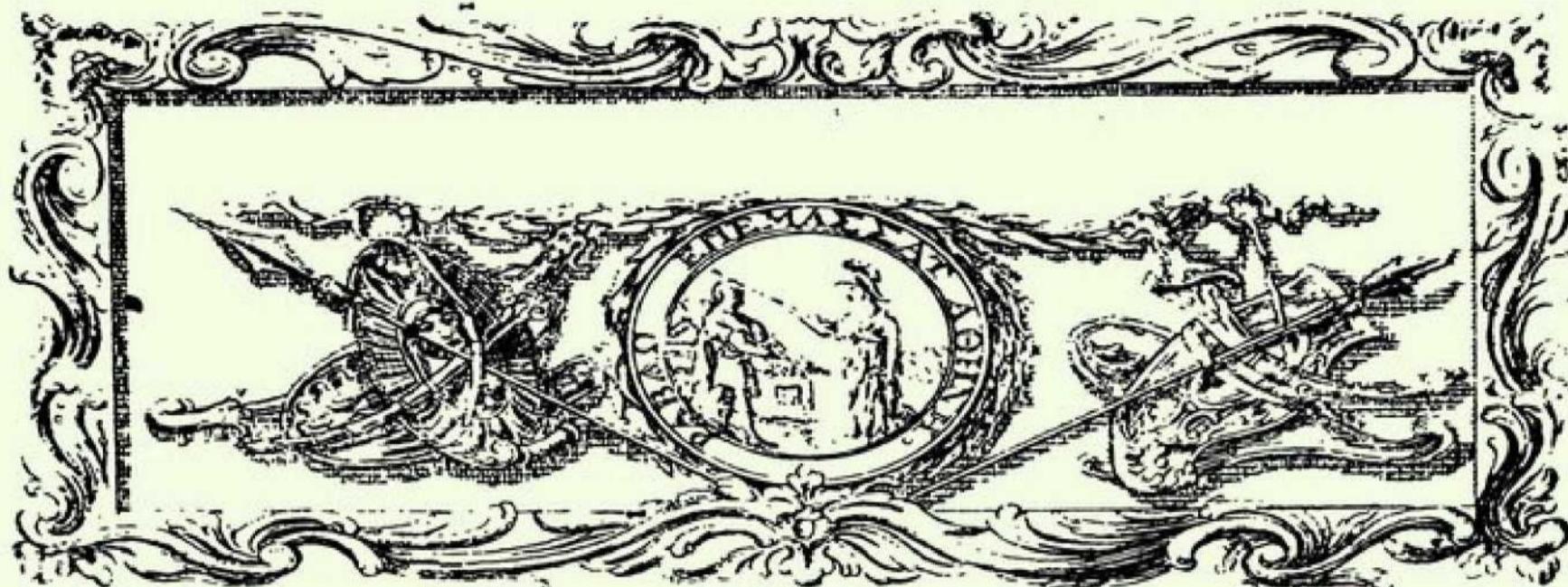




## The A R G U M E N T.

### *The Discovery of Ulysses to Telemachus.*

**T**ELEMACHUS arriving at the lodge of Eumæus sends him to carry Penelope the news of his return. Minerva appearing to Ulysses commands him to discover himself to his son. The Princes, who had lain in ambush to intercept Telemachus in his way, their project being defeated, return to Ithaca.



THE  
SIXTEENTH BOOK  
OF THE  
ODYSSEY.

**S**OON as the morning blush'd along the plains,  
*Ulysses*, and the Monarch of the Swains,  
Awake the sleeping fires, their meal prepare,  
And forth to pasture send the bristly care.

[*y. i. Soon as the morning blush'd along the plains, &c.*] This Book opens with the greatest simplicity imaginable. *Dionysius Halicarnassus* quotes the sixteen first Lines to this purpose: the Poet, says that Author, describes a low and vulgar action, yet gives it an inexpressible sweetnes; the ear is pleased with the harmony of the Poetry, and yet there is nothing noble in the sentiments. Whence, continues he, does this arise? from the choice of the words, or from the placing of them?



## 60 HOMER's ODYSSEY. BOOK XVI.

The Prince's near approach the dogs descry, 5  
And fawning round his feet confess their joy.

No one will affirm that it consists in the choice of the words, for the diction is entirely low and vulgar, so vulgar that a common Artificer or Peasant, who never studied elocution, would use it in conversation; turn the Verses into Prose, and this will appear. There are no transpositions, no figures, no variety of dialect, nor any new and studied expressions. Where then is the beauty of the Poetry? It must be entirely ascribed to the harmonious juncture and position of the words; and he concludes that the *collocation* of words has a greater efficacy both in Prose and Poetry, than the *choice*. And indeed a judicious Disposition of them (like what is feigned of *Minerva* in this book) makes a mean, deformed, and vulgar period, rise, like *Ulysses* from beggary, into pomp and dignity. This may be exemplified from the rules of mechanick arts: an architect, when he gathers his materials for a building, has these three things chiefly in view: first, with what piece of stone, wood, &c. a correspondent piece will best agree: next he considers their several formations, and how it will best stand in the structure; and lastly, if any part of the materials suits not with the allotted place, he rejects it or new shapes it, till it agrees with the whole work: the same care is to be taken by a good writer: he is first to consider what Noun or Verb is to be joined to other Nouns or Verbs so fitly as not possibly to be placed more conveniently; for a promiscuous connecting of words indiscriminately spoils both Prose and Poetry: next he considers the frame or turn of the Verb or Noun, and how it will stand in the place he allots it; and if it suits not exactly, he changes it, sometimes by varying the Numbers, sometimes the Cases, and at other times the Genders: and lastly, if a word prove so stubborn as not to bend to the level of the period, he intirely rejects it, and introduces another that preserves a due conformity; or at least, if an inharmonious word be necessary, he places it so judiciously between more agreeable and tuneful words, that their harmony steals



## BOOK XVI. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 61

Their gentle blandishment the King survey'd,  
Heard his resounding step, and instant said :

away our imagination from observing the roughness of the others : like wise Generals, who in ordering the ranks of their Soldiers, strengthen the weaker files by sustaining them with the stronger ; and by this method render the whole invincible. See likewise *cap. xxxii.* of *Longinus*, of the disposition of words.

γ. 3. —— *their meal prepare.*] The word in the original is ἄριστος, which here denotes very evidently the morning repast : it is used but in one other place in all *Homer* in this sense : *Iliad, lib. xxiv. γ. 124.*

\*Εσσυμένως ἐπένοστο καὶ ἀπύνοστο ἄριστος.

But we are not therefore to imagine that this was an usual meal ; *Homer* in other places expresses it by δεῖπνος, as is observed by *Athenaeus, lib. i.*

Οἱ δὲ ἄρα δεῖπνον ἔλαστ' ἀπὸ δὲ αὐτῷ θαξίσσοντο.

“ At the dawn of the day they took repast and armed themselves for battle.” The Greeks had three customary meals, which are distinctly mentioned by *Palamedes* in *Aeschylus,*

\*Ἀριστα, δεῖπνα, δόρπαθ' αἰγεῖσθαι τρίτα.

*Homer*, adds *Athenaeus*, mentions a fourth repast, *lib. xvii.* of the *Odysssey* :

———— σὺ δὲ ἔχει δειπνήσας.

This the *Romans* called *commensationem*, we a collation, a repast taken, as the same Author explains it, between dinner and supper ; the word is derived ἀπὸ τῆς δείλης ὥψιας, or the evening twilight. But *Athenaeus* refutes himself, *lib. v. p. 193.* I have already (says he) observed that the Antients eat thrice a day ; and it is ridiculous to imagine that they eat four times from these words of *Homer*,



## 62 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xvi.

Some well-known friend (*Eumæus*) bends this way ;

His steps I hear ; the dogs familiar play. 10

While yet he spoke, the Prince advancing drew Nigh to the lodge, and now appear'd in view.

Transported from his seat *Eumæus* sprung,  
Dropp'd the full bowl, and round his bosom hung ;

————— οὐ δὲ ἔχει δειλιήσας.

For that expression meant only that *Eumæus* should return in the evening, δειλιών διατέρψας χρόνον. But this is not the full import of the word δειλιήσας, for it undoubtedly means, to take the evening repast or supper, as is evident from the conclusion of the seventeenth book of the *Odysssey*: *Return*, says *Telemachus* to *Eumæus*, but first take Refreshment ; and *Eumæus* accordingly eats, and the Poet immediately adds, because the Evening was come, or ἐπήλυθε δειλιόν τῆμαξ. However, in no sense can this word be brought to prove that the Greeks eat four times in the day : but if any person will imagine, that it signifies in that place an immediate meal, all that can be gathered from it is, that *Telemachus* out of kindness to *Eumæus* commands him to eat before the usual hour of repast, before he leaves his palace : but *Hesychius* rightly interprets it by τὸ δειλιών λάζων ἔμβολημα, that is, eating his supper ; for as δεῖπνος and ἀρισταντία signify the dinner, so δόξποτος and δειλιών denote the time of supper promiscuously.

I will add no more, but refer the reader for a full Explication of δεῖπνος, ἀρισταντία and δειλιών, to lib. viii. Ques. 6. of *Plutarch's Symposiacks*.

y. 14. *Dropp'd the full bowl* ———] In the original it is, *Eumæus* dropped the bowl as he tempered it with water. It was customary not to drink wine unmixed with water among the ancients ; there was no certain proportion observed in the



## BOOK XVI. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 63

Kissing his cheek, his hand, while from his eye 15  
The tears rain'd copious in a show'r of joy.  
As some fond fire who ten long winters grieves,  
From foreign climes an only son receives,  
(Child of his age) with strong paternal joy  
Forward he springs, and clasps the fav'rite boy: 20  
So round the youth his arms *Eumeus* spread,  
As if the grave had giv'n him from the dead.

mixture, some to one vessel of wine poured in two of water, others to two of wine five of water. Homer tells us that the wine of *Mars* was so strong as to require twenty measures of water to one of wine; but perhaps this is spoken hyperbolically, to shew the uncommon strength of it. The *Lacedæmonians* used to boil their wine till the fifth part was consumed, and then keeping it four years, drank it: but sometimes the *Grecians* drank it without water (but this they called reproachfully *im̄m̄ēbīs̄t̄i*, or to act like a *Sybilian*, from whom they borrowed the custom.) It was usual even for children to drink wine thus tempered amongst the *Grecians*, thus in this book *Eurymachus*,

————— ἐπέσχε δὲ οὐαὶ ἐξθρόνον.

And *Phœnix* in the ninth of the *Iliad*, speaking of *Achilles*;

————— οὐαὶ ἐπέσχε  
Ποτάκι μοι κατεῖσας.

At *Athens* there was an altar erected to *Bacchus* Βάκχος, because from thus tempering the wine men returned upright or sober from entertainments; and a law was enacted by *Amphytriton*, and afterwards revived by *Solon*, that no unmixed wine should be drank at any entertainment.



## 64 HOMER's ODYSSEY. BOOK XVI.

And is it thou ? my ever-dear delight !  
O art thou come to bless my longing sight ?  
Never, I never hop'd to view this day,      25  
When o'er the waves you plough'd the desp'rate  
way.

Enter, my child ! beyond my hopes restor'd,  
O give these eyes to feast upon their lord.  
Enter, oh seldom seen ! for lawless pow'rs  
Too much detain thee from these silvan bow'rs. 30

The Prince reply'd ; *Eumæus*, I obey ;  
To seek thee, friend, I hither took my way.  
But say, if in the court the Queen reside  
Severely chaste, or if commenc'd a bride ?

¶. 33. — — — if in the court the Queen reside  
Severely chaste, or if commenc'd a bride ?]

Homer here makes use of a proverbial expression. It may thus be literally translated,

Or say if obstinate no more to wed,  
She dooms to spiders nets th' imperial bed :

*Telemachus* means by this question, if *Penelope* be determined no more to marry ; for the marriage bed was esteemed so sacred, that upon the decease or absence of the husband, it remained unused.

*Eustathius* quotes the same expression from other Authors of Antiquity ; thus *Hesiod*,

'Εν δ' αἴγειν, θάσιας ἀγάρησα.



BOOK XVI. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 65

Thus He : and thus the Monarch of the  
Swains ; 35

Severely chaste *Penelope* remains,  
But lost to ev'ry joy, she wastes the day  
In tedious cares, and weeps the night away.

He ended, and (receiving as they pass  
The jav'lin, pointed with a star of brass) 40  
They reach'd the dome ; the dome with marble  
Shin'd.

His seat *Ulysses* to the Prince resign'd.

" You shall clear thē vessels from spiders webs ;" meaning  
that you shall have so full employment for your vess'ls, that the  
spiders shall no more spread their looms there. And another Poet  
praying for peace, wishes spiders may weave their nets upon  
the soldiers arms ; ἐτέρος πειθόντης ἔβησεν εἰς τὴν εὐξέχοντα, ἀγάχας ἵπευ-  
χεται μύατα ἴφαντι τοῖς ἐπλόντοις. Thus we find among the Greeks  
it was an expression of dignity, and applied to great and se-  
rious occasions ; I am not certain that it is so used by the  
Romans. *Catullus* uses it jocosely, speaking of his empty  
purse.

— — — " nam tui Catulli  
" Plenus sacculus est aanearum."

*Pannus* does the same in his *Aulularia* :

— — — " anne quis ædes auferat ?  
" Nam hic apud nos nihil est aliud quæsti furibus,  
" Ita inaniis sunt oppletæ, atque araneis."

I am doubtful if it be not too mean an image for English  
Poetry.



## 66 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xvi.

Not so —— (exclaims the Prince with decent grace)  
For me, this house shall find an humbler place :  
'T usurp the honours due to silver hairs      45

And rev'rend strangers, modest youth forbears.

Instant the swain the spoils of beasts supplies,

And bids the rural throne with osiers rise.

There sat the Prince : the feast *Eumæus* spread,  
And heap'd the shining canisters with bread. 50  
Thick o'er the board the plenteous viands lay,  
The frugal remnants of the former day.

¶. 43. *Not so —— (exclaims the Prince ——)*] Nothing can more strongly represent the respect which antiquity paid to strangers, than this conduct of *Telemachus*: *Ulysses* is in rags, in the disguise of a beggar, and yet a Prince refuses to take his seat. I doubt not but every good man will be pleased with such instances of benevolence and humanity to his fellow-creatures; one well-natured action is preferable to a thousand great ones, and *Telemachus* appears with more advantage upon this heap of hides and osiers, than a Tyrant upon his throne.

¶. 52. *The frugal remnants of the former day.*] This entertainment is neither to be ascribed to parsimony nor poverty, but to the custom and hospitality of former ages. It was a common expression among the Greeks at table, *leave something for the Medes*; intimating that something ought to be left for a guest that might come accidentally. *Plutarch* in his seventh Book of the *Sympoſ. Quesitiōn* 3. commends this conduct. *Eumæus* (says that Author) a wise scholar of a wise master, is no way discomposed, when *Telemachus* pays him a visit, he immediately sets before him



BOOK XVI. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 67

Then in a bowl he tempers gen'rous wines,  
Around whose verge a mimick Ivy twines.  
And now the rage of thirst and hunger fled, 55  
Thus young *Ulysses* to *Eumeus* said.

Whence father, from what shore this stranger,  
say ?

What vessel bore him o'er the wat'ry way ?  
To human step our land impervious lies,  
And round the coast circumfluent oceans rise. 60

The swain returns. A tale of sorrows hear ;  
In spacious *Crete* he drew his natal air,  
Long doom'd to wander o'er the land and main,  
For heav'n has wove his thread of life with  
pain.

Half-breathless 'scaping to the land he flew 65  
From *Thesprot* mariners, a murd'rous crew.  
To thee my son the suppliant I resign,  
I gave him my protection, grant him thine.

The frugal remnants of the former day.

Besides; the table was accounted sacred to the Gods, and nothing that was sacred was permitted to be empty ; this was another reason why the Antients always reserved part of their provisions, not solely out of hospitality to men, but piety to the Gods.



## 68 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xvi.

Hard task, he cries, thy virtue gives thy friend,  
Willing to aid, unable to defend. • 70

¶. 70. *Willing to aid, ——*] It has been observed that *Homer* intended to give us the picture of a complete Hero in his two Poems, drawn from the characters of *Achilles* and *Ulysses*: *Achilles* has consummate valour, but wants the wisdom of *Ulysses*: *Ulysses* has courage, but courage inclining to caution and stratagem, as much as that of *Achilles* to rashness. *Virgil* endeavoured to form a compleat Hero in *Aeneas*, by joining in his person the forward Courage of *Achilles*, with the wisdom of *Ulysses*, and by this conduct give us a perfect character. The same observation holds good with respect to the subordinate characters introduced into the two Poems of the *Iliad* and *Odysssey*; and makes an essential difference between them: thus the *Iliad* exhibiting an example of heroick valour, almost all the characters are violent and heroick. *Diomed*, *Ajax*, *Hector*, &c. are all chiefly remarkable for courage: but the *Odysssey* being intended to represent the patience and wisdom of an Hero, almost all the characters are distinguished by benevolence and humanity. *Telemachus* and *Eumæus*, *Alcinous*, *Nestor* and *Menelaus* are every where represented in the mild light of wisdom and hospitality. This makes a continued difference of style in the Poetry of the two Poems, and the characters of the agents in the *Odysssey* necessarily exhibit lectures of piety and morality. The Reader should keep this in his view. In reading *Homer*, the *Odysssey* is to be looked upon as a sequel of the *Iliad*, and then he will find in the two Poems the perfection of human nature, consummate courage joined with consummate piety. He must be an unobserving Reader, who has not taken notice of that *Vein of humanity* that runs through the whole *Odysssey*; and a bad man, that has not been pleased with it. In my opinion, *Eumæus* tending his herds is more amiable than *Achilles* in all his destructive Glory. There is scarce a speech made in the *Odysssey* by *Eumæus*, *Telemachus* or *Ulysses*, but what tends to the improvement of mankind: it was this that endeared the *Odysssey* to the Antients,



BOOK XVI. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 69

Can strangers safely in the court reside,  
Midst the swell'd insolence of lust and pride ?  
Ev'n I unsafe : the Queen in doubt to wed,  
Or pay due honours to the nuptial bed ?  
Perhaps she weds regardless of her fame, 75  
Deaf to the mighty *Ulyssian* name.

However, Stranger ! from our grace receive  
Such honours as befit a Prince to give ;  
Sandals, a sword, and robes, respect to prove,  
And safe to fail with ornaments of love. 80  
'Till then, thy guest amid the rural train  
Far from the court, from danger far, detain.  
'Tis mine with food the hungry to supply,  
And cloath the naked from th' inclement sky.

and *Homer's* sentences of morality were in every mouth, and introduced in all conversations for the better conduct of human life. This Verse was thus applied by some of the Antients ; a person being asked what was the Duty of an Orator, or Pleader, answered from *Homer*,

"Ἄντες ἀπαρνίας οὐ τις προτίθεται χρηστήν.

In short, I will not deny but that the *Iliad* is by far the nobler Poem, with respect to the Poetry ; it is fit to be read by Kings and Heroes ; but the *Odyssey* is of use to all mankind, as it teaches us to be good men rather than great, and to prefer morality to glory.



## 70 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book xvi.

Here dwell in safety from the suitors wrongs, 85

And the rude insults of ungovern'd tongues.

For should'st thou suffer, pow'rless to relieve

I must behold it, and can only grieve.

The brave encompass'd by an hostile train,

O'erpower'd by numbers, is but brave in vain. 90

To whom, while anger in his bosom glows,  
With warmth replies the man of mighty woes.  
Since audience mild is deign'd, permit my tongue  
At once to pity and resent thy wrong.

My heart weeps blood, to see a soul so brave 95  
Live to base insolence of pow'r a slave.

¶. 92. *With warmth replies the man of mighty woes*] There is not a more spirited speech in all the *Odyssey* than this of *Ulysses*; his resentment arises from the last words of *Telemachus*, observes *Eustathius*:

The brave encompass'd by an hostile train,  
O'erpower'd by numbers, is but brave in vain.

He is preparing his son for the destruction of the Suitors, and animating him against despair by reason of their Numbers. This he brings about, by representing that a brave man in a good cause prefers death to dishonour. By the same method Homer exalts the character of *Ulysses*: *Telemachus* thinks it impossible to resist the Suitors, *Ulysses* not only resists them, but almost without assistance works their destruction. There is a fine contrast between the tried courage of *Ulysses*, and the inexperience of *Telemachus*.



BOOK XVI. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 71

But tell me, dost thou Prince, dost thou behold,  
And hear, their midnight revels uncontroll'd ?  
Say, do thy subjects in bold faction rise,  
Or priests in fabled Oracles advise ? 100  
Or are thy brothers, who should aid thy pow'r,  
Turn'd mean deserters in the needful hour ?  
O that I were from great Ulysses sprung,  
Or that these wither'd nerves like thine were  
strung ; 104

Or, heav'n ! might he return ! (and soon appear  
He shall, I trust ; a Hero scorns despair)

v. 105. — — — (And soon appear  
He shall, I trust ; a Hero scorns despair).]

Some antient criticks, as *Eustathius* informs us, rejected this verse, and thus read the passage :

"Η ταῦς οὐδὲν Ὀδυσσεῖον ἀμίμων, οὐδὲ καὶ αὐτὸς ;  
Αἰτίην ἔπειτα πάντα εὔστον νάρην τάχας ἀλλότριος φένει.

Then the sense will be, *Oh that I were the son of Ulysses, or Ulysses himself, &c.*

For, add they, if this verſe be admitted, it breaks the transport of Ulysses's resentment, and cools the warmth of the expression ; *Eustathius* confesses that he was once of the same opinion, but afterwards seems dubious ; for continues he, *Ulysses* by saying, *Oh that I were the son of Ulysses, or Ulysses himself*, gave room to suspect that he was himself *Ulysses* ; and therefore to efface this Impression, he adds with great Address,

— — — (And soon appear  
He shall, I trust ; a Hero scorns despair)



72 HOMER's ODYSSEY. BOOK XVI.

Might he return, I yield my life a prey  
To my worst foe, if that avenging day  
Be not their last : but should I lose my life  
Oppress'd by numbers in the glorious strife, 110  
I chuse the nobler part, and yield my breath,  
Rather than bear dishonour, worse than death ;  
Than see the hand of violence invade  
The rev'rend stranger, and the spotless maid ;  
Than see the wealth of Kings consum'd in waste,  
The drunkards revel, and the gluttons feast. 116

Thus he, with anger flashing from his eye ;  
Sincere the youthful Hero made reply.  
Nor leagu'd in factious arms my subjects rise,  
Nor priests in fabled oracles advise ; 120  
And by this method removes all jealousy that might arise  
from his former expression. *Dacier* misrepresents *Eustathius* ;  
he says, *Il avoit donné lieu à quelque subçon qu'il ne fust verita-  
blement Ulysse* ; whereas he directly says μὴ ἵππηνδὴν ἔτι Οδύσσεως  
ἔτις ὁ λαλῶν, that is, “ he uses this expression, that it may not  
“ be suspected that he is *Ulysses* who speaks :” in reality he  
inserts these words solely to avoid discovery, not judging it  
yet reasonable to reveal himself to *Telemachus*, much less to  
*Eumeus*.

\*. 108. *To my worst foe.*] The words in Greek are ἀλλότριος  
ἕτερος, or, *may I fall by the hand of a stranger*: that is, by the  
worst of enemies, foreigners being usually the most barbarous  
enemies. This circumstance therefore aggravates the cala-  
mity *Eustathius*.



BOOK XVI. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 73

Nor are my brothers who should aid my pow'r  
Turn'd mean deserters in the needful hour.  
Ah me ! I boast no brother ; heav'n's dread King  
Gives from our stock an only branch to spring :  
Alone *Laertes* reign'd *Arceſtus'* heir,                  125  
Alone *Ulyſſes* drew the vital air,  
And I alone the bed connubial grac'd,  
An unbleſt offspring of a fire unbleſt !  
Each neigb'ring realm, conducive to our woe,  
Sends forth her peers, and ev'ry peer a foe : 130  
The court proud *Samos* and *Dulicium* fills,  
And lofty *Zacinth* crown'd with shady hills.  
Ev'n *Ithaca* and all her Lords invade  
Th' imperial ſcepter, and the regal bed :  
The Queen averſe to love, yet aw'd by pow'r, 135  
Seems half to yield, yet flies the bridal hour :  
Meantime their licence uncontroll'd, I bear ;  
Ev'n now they envy me the vital air :                  }  
But heav'n will ſure revenge, and Gods there are.                  }

¶. 127. *And I alone the bed connubial grac'd.] Homer men-*  
*tions but one ſon of Ulyſſes; other Authors name another,*  
*Archeſilaus; and Sophocles, Eurylaus ſlain by Telemachus;* but  
*perhaps theſe descended not from Penelope. Eustathius.*



74 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xvi.

But go, *Eumæus!* to the Queen impart 140  
Our safe return, and ease a mother's heart.  
Yet secret go ; for num'rous are my foes,  
And here at least I may in peace repose.

To whom the swain, I hear, and I obey :  
But old *Laertes* weeps his life away, 145  
And deems thee lost : shall I my speed employ  
To bless his age, a messenger of joy ?  
The mournful hour that tore his son away  
Sent the sad fire in solitude to stray ;

¶. 140. *But go, Eumæus ! to the Queen impart.*] There is nothing more wonderful in *Homer*, than the distribution of his incidents ; and how fully must he be possessed of his whole subject, and take it in all at one view, to bring about the several parts of it naturally ? *Minerva* in the beginning of the fifteenth Book commanded *Telemachus* to dispatch *Eumæus* to *Penelope*, to inform her of his return. Here this command is executed : but is this all the use the Poet makes of that Errand ? It is evident it is not : this command furnishes him with a natural occasion for the removal of *Eumæus* while *Ulysses* discovers himself to *Telemachus*. But why might not the discovery have been made before *Eumæus*? It was suitable to the cautious character of *Ulysses* not to trust the knowledge of his person to too many people : besides, if he had here revealed himself to *Eumæus*, there would not have been room for the discovery which is made in the future parts of the *Odyssey*, and consequently the Reader had been robbed of the pleasure of it : and it must be allowed, that the several concealments and discoveries of *Ulysses* through the *Odyssey* add no small pleasure and beauty to it.



## BOOK XVI. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 75

Yet busied with his slaves, to ease his woe, 150  
He drest the vine, and bade the garden blow,  
Nor food nor wine refus'd : but since the day  
That you to *Pylos* plough'd the wat'ry way,  
Nor wine nor food he tastes ; but sunk in woes,  
Wild springs the vine, no more the garden  
blows :

155

Shut from the walks of men, to pleasure lost,  
Penfive and pale he wanders, half a ghost.

Wretched old man ! (with tears the Prince re-  
turns)

Yet cease to go — what man so blest but mourns ?

[*¶. 159. Yet cease to go — what man so blest but mourns ?*] *Eustathius* reads the words differently, either *ἀχνύμενος* *πει*, or *ἀχνύντας* *πει*. If we use the former reading, it will be understood according to the recited translation ; if the latter, it must then be referred to *Telemachus*, and imply, *let us cease to inform Laertes, though we grieve for him*. I suppose some Criticks were shocked at the words in the former sense, and thought it cruel in *Telemachus* not to relieve the sorrows of *Laertes*, which were occasioned chiefly through fondness to his person : *Dacier* is fully of this opinion : *Eustathius* prefers neither of the lections ; I doubt not but *Homer* wrote *ἀχνύμενος* *πει*; this agrees with the whole context.

Wretched old man ! (with tears the Prince returns)  
Yet cease to go — what man so blest but mourns ?  
Were every wish indulg'd by fav'ring skies,  
This hour shou'd give *Ulysses* to my eyes.



76 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xvi.

Were every wish indulg'd by fav'ring skies, 160  
This hour shou'd give *Ulysses* to my eyes.  
But to the Queen with speed dispatchful bear  
Our safe return, and back with speed repair :  
And let some handmaid of her train resort  
To good *Laertes* in his rural court. 165

While yet he spoke, impatient of delay  
He brac'd his sandals on, and strode away :  
Then from the heav'ns the martial Goddess flies  
Thro' the wide fields of air, and cleaves the  
skies ;

In form, a virgin in soft beauty's bloom, 170  
Skill'd in th' illustrious labours of the loom.

And as for the cruelty of *Telemachus*, in forbidding *Eumæus* to go to *Laertes*, there is no room for this objection : he guards against it, by requesting *Penelope* to give him immediate information ; which might be done almost as soon by a messenger from her, as by *Eumæus*. Besides, such a messenger to *Laertes* would be entirely foreign to the Poem ; for his knowledge of the return of *Telemachus* could contribute nothing to the design of the *Odysssey* : whereas the information given to *Penelope* has this effect ; it puts the Suitors upon new measures, and instructs her how to regulate her own conduct with regard to them ; and therefore the Poet judiciously dwells upon this, and passes over the other.

¶. 170. *In form, a virgin* —] Some of the antient Philosophers thought the Poets guilty of impiety, in representing the Gods assuming human appearances ; *Plato* in particular



## BOOK XVI. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 77

Alone to *Ithacus* she stood display'd,  
But unapparent as a viewless shade  
Escap'd *Telemachus*: (the pow'rs above  
Seen or unseen, o'er earth at pleasure move) 175

(lib. ii. *de Repub.*) speaks with great severity. " If a God  
" (says that Author) changes his own shape, must he assume  
" a more or less perfect form? undoubtedly a shape less per-  
" fect; for a Deity, as a Deity, can want no perfection;  
" therefore all change must be for the worse: now it is ab-  
" surd to imagine that a Deity can be willing to assume im-  
" perfection, for this would be a degradation unworthy of a  
" divine Power, and consequently it is absurd to imagine  
" that a Deity can be willing to change the form of a Deity;  
" it therefore follows, that the Gods enjoying a perfection  
" of nature, must eternally and unchangeably appear in it.  
" Let no Poet therefore (meaning *Homer*) persuade you that  
" the Gods assume the form of strangers, and are visible in such  
" appearances." It must be confessed, that if *Plato* had thus  
spoken only to refute the absurd opinions of Antiquity,  
which imagined the Gods to assume unworthy shapes of  
bulls, dragons, swans, &c. only to perform some rape, or  
action unbecoming a Deity, reason would have been on his  
side: but the argument proves too much; it supposes that a  
Deity must lose his perfections by any appearance, but of a  
Deity; which is an error: if a God acts suitably to the  
character of a God, where is the degradation? *Aristotle* was  
of this judgment, in opposition to his master *Plato*; and  
thought it no diminution to a God to appear in the shape of  
man, the glory of the Creation: in reality, it is a great ho-  
nour to *Homer*, that his opinions agree with the verity of the  
Scriptures, rather than the conjectures of Philosophers; nay,  
it is not impossible but these relations might be borrowed  
from the sacred History: it being manifest that *Homer* had  
been in *Ægypt*, the native country of *Moses*, in whose wri-  
tings there are frequent instances of this nature.



78 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xvi.

The dogs intelligent confess'd the tread  
Of pow'r divine, and howling, trembling fled.  
The Goddess, beck'ning, waves her deathless  
hands ;

Dauntless the King before the Goddess stands.

¶. 176. *The dogs intelligent confess'd the tread  
Of pow'r divine —— ]*

'This may seem a circumstance unworthy of Poetry, and ridiculous to ascribe a greater sagacity to the brute creation, than to man ; but it may be answered, that it was the design of the Goddess to be invisible only to *Telemachus*, and consequently she was visible to the dogs. But I am willing to believe that there is a deeper meaning, and a beautiful moral couched under this story : and perhaps *Homer* speaks thus, to give us to understand, that the brute creation itself confesses the divinity. *Dacier*.

¶. 178. *The Goddess, beck'ning, waves her deathless hands.]* The Goddess evidently acts thus, that *Telemachus* might not hear her speak to *Ulysses*; for this would have made the discovery, and precluded that beautiful interview between *Ulysses* and *Telemachus* that immediately follows. It is for the same reason that she conceals herself from *Telemachus*, for the discovery must have been fully and convincingly made by the appearance and veracity of a Deity ; and then there could have been no room for all those doubts and fears of *Telemachus*, that enliven and beautify the manner of the discovery. The whole relation is indeed an allegory : the wisdom of *Ulysses* (in Poetry, *Minerva*) suggests to him, that this is a proper time to reveal himself to *Telemachus*; the same wisdom (or *Minerva*) instructs him to dress himself like a King, that he may find the readier credit with his son : in this dress he appears a new man, young and beautiful, which gives occasion to *Telemachus* to imagine him a Deity ; especially because he was an infant when his father sailed to *Troy*, and therefore though he now



BOOK XVI. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 79

Then why (she said) O favour'd of the skies !  
Why to thy God-like son this long disguise ? 181  
Stand forth reveal'd : with him thy cares employ  
Against thy foes ; be valiant, and destroy !  
Lo I descend in that avenging hour,  
To combat by thy side, thy guardian pow'r. 185

She said, and o'er him waves her wand of gold ;  
Imperial robes his manly limbs infold :  
At once with grace divine his frame improves ;  
At once with majesty enlarg'd he moves :  
Youth flush'd his red'ning cheek, and from his  
brows 190

A length of hair in sable ringlets flows ;  
His black'ning chin receives a deeper shade ;  
Then from his eyes upsprung the warriour-maid.

The Hero re-ascends : the Prince o'eraw'd  
Scarce lifts his eyes, and bows as to a God. 195

appears like *Ulysses*, *Telemachus* does not know him to be his father. This is the naked story, when stript of its poetical ornaments.

\*. 194. —— *The Prince o'eraw'd*

*Scarce lifts his eyes, and bows as to a God.]*

I must offer a remark in opposition to that of *Dacier* upon this place : “ This fear of *Telemachus* (says that Author) pro-



## 80 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xvi.

Then with surprise (surprise chas'tis'd by fears)  
How art thou chang'd! (he cry'd) a God appears!

" ceeds from the opinion of the Antients when the Gods  
" came down visibly ; they thought themselves so unworthy  
" of such a manifestation, that whenever it happened, they  
" believed they should die, or meet with some great cala-  
" mity" : thus the *Israelites* address *Moses* ; *Speak thou to us,*  
*and we will hear, but let not the Lord speak to us, lest we die.*  
Thus also *Gideon* ; *Alas ! O Lord, my God, because I have seen*  
*an Angel of the Lord face to face ; and the Lord said to him, fear*  
*not, thou shalt not die.* Hence it is very evident, that this no-  
tion prevailed amongst the *Israelites* : but how does it appear  
that the *Greeks* held the same opinion ? The contrary is ma-  
nifest almost to a demonstration : the Gods are introduced al-  
most in every book both of the *Iliad* and *Odysssey* ; and yet there  
is not the least foundation for such an assertion : nay, *Tele-  
machus* himself in the second book returns thanks to *Minerva*  
for appearing to him, and prays for a second vision.

O Goddess ! who descending from the skies,  
Vouchsaf'd thy presence to my longing eyes ;  
Hear from thy heav'ns above, O warriour Maid,  
Descend once more propitious to my aid !

It is not to be imagined that *Telemachus* would have preferred  
this prayer, if the presence of the Deity denoted death, or  
some great calamity ; and all the Heroes throughout the *Iliad*  
esteem such intercourses as their glory, and converse with the  
Gods without any apprehensions. But whence then proceeds  
this fear of *Telemachus* ? entirely from a reverential awe and  
his own modesty while he stands in the presence of a Deity ;  
for, such he believes *Ulysses*. The words of *Telemachus* agree  
with his behaviour ; he speaks the language of a man in sur-  
prise : it is this surprise at the sudden change of *Ulysses*, that  
first makes him imagine him a Deity, and upon that imagina-  
tion offer him sacrifice and prayer ; the whole behaviour  
paints the nature of man under surprise, and which transports  
the speaker into vehemence and emotion.



BOOK XVI. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 81

Far other vests thy limbs majestic grace,  
Far other glories lighten from thy face !  
If heav'n be thy abode, with pious care 200

Lo ! I the ready sacrifice prepare :

Lo ! gifts of labour'd gold adorn thy shrine,  
To win thy grace : O save us pow'r divine !

Few are my days, *Ulysses* made reply,  
Nor I, alas ! descendant of the sky. 205

I am thy father. O my son ! my son !  
That father, for whose sake thy days have run  
One scene of woe ; to endless cares consign'd,  
And outrag'd by the wrongs of base mankind.

Then rushing to his arms, he kiss'd his boy 210  
With the strong raptures of a parent's joy.  
Tears bathe his cheek, and tears the ground be-  
dew :

He strain'd him close, as to his breast he grew.  
Ah me ! (exclaims the Prince with fond desire)  
Thou art not — no, thou canst not be my  
fire. 215

Heav'n such illusion only can impose,  
By the false joy to aggravate my woes.



82 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xvi.

Who but a God can change the general doom,  
And give to wither'd age a youthful bloom ?  
Late, worn with years, in weeds obscene you  
trod ;

220

Now, cloath'd in majesty, you move a God !

Forbear, he cry'd ; for heav'n reserve that  
name,

Give to thy father but a father's claim :  
Other *Ulysses* shalt thou never see,  
I am *Ulysses*, I (my son) am He.

225

Twice ten sad years o'er earth and ocean tost,  
'Tis giv'n at length to view my native coast.

*Pallas*, unconquer'd maid, my frame surrounds  
With grace divine ; her pow'r admits no bounds :  
She o'er my limbs old age and wrinkles shed ;

230

Now strong as youth, magnificent I tread.

The Gods with ease frail man deprefs, or raise,  
Exalt the lowly, or the proud debase.

He spoke and sat. The Prince with transport  
flew,

Hung round his neck, while tears his cheek  
bedew ;

235



## BOOK XVI. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 83

Nor less the father pour'd a social flood !  
They wept abundant, and they wept aloud.  
As the bold eagle with fierce sorrow stung,  
Or parent vultur, mourns her ravish'd young ;

¶. 238. *As the bold eagle* ——] This is a beautiful comparison ; but to take its full force, it is necessary to observe the nature of this φωνη or vultur : Homer does not compare Ulysses to that bird merely for its dignity, it being of the Aquiline kind, and therefore the King of birds ; but from the knowledge of the nature of it, which doubles the beauty of the allusion : this bird is remarkable for the love it bears towards its young : *Tearing open her own Thigh, she feeds her young with her own blood* : thus also another Author ;

Τὸν μηρὸν ἐκλέμνοντες, ἡματωμένοις  
Γάλακτος ὀλκοῖς Ζωπύρσοι τὰ βρέφη.

*Femore exsecito, sanguineo lactis defluxit suos fætus refocillant.*  
And the Egyptians made the vultur their hieroglyphic, to represent a compassionate nature. This gives a reason why this bird is introduced with peculiar propriety to represent the fondness of Ulysses for Telemachus. But where is the point of the similitude ? Ulysses embraces his son, but the vultur is said to mourn the loss of her young : Eustathius answers, that the sorrow alone, and vehemence of it, is intended to be illustrated by the comparison ; I think he should have added the affection Ulysses bears to Telemachus.

It is observable, that Homer infers very few similitudes in his *Odysssey*, though they occur frequently almost in every book of the *Iliad*. The *Odysssey* is wrote with more simplicity, and consequently there is less room for allusions. If we observe the similes themselves inserted in each Poem, we shall find the same difference : in the *Iliad* they are drawn from lions, storms, torrents, conflagrations, thunder, &c. In the *Odysssey*, from lower objects, from an heap of thorns, from a shipwright plying the wimble, an armourer tempering iron, a



## 84 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xvi.

They cry, they scream, their unfledg'd brood a  
prey

240

To some rude churl, and borne by stealth away;

matron weeping over her dying husband, &c. The similes are likewise generally longer in the *Iliad* than the *Odyssey*, and less resemblance between the thing illustrated, and the illustration; the reason is, in the *Iliad* the similitudes are introduced to illustrate some great and noble object, and therefore the Poet proceeds till he has raised some noble image to inflame the mind of the Reader; whereas in these calmer scenes the Poet keeps closer to the point of allusion, and needs only to represent the object, to render it entertaining: by the former conduct he raises our admiration above the subject, by adding foreign embellishments; in the latter he brings the copy as close as possible to the original, to possess us with a true and equal image of it.

It has been objected by a *French* Critick, that *Homer* is blameable for too great a length in his similitudes; that in the heat of an action he stops short, and turns to some allusion, which calls off our attention from the main subject. It is true, comparisons ought not to be too long, and are not to be placed in the heat of an action, as Mr. *Dryden* observes, but when it begins to decline: thus in the first *Aeneis*, when the storm is in its fury, the Poet introduces no comparison, because nothing can be more impetuous than the storm itself; but when the heat of the description abates, then lest we should cool too soon, he renewes it by some proper similitude, which still keeps up our attention, and fixes the whole upon our minds. The similitude before us is thus placed at the conclusion of the Hero's lamentation, and the Poet by this method leaves the whole deeply mixed upon the memory. *Virgil* has imitated this comparison in his fourth *Georgic*, but very judiciously substituted the nightingale in the place of the vultur, that bird being introduc'd to represent the mournful musick of *Orpheus*.



So they aloud : and tears in tides had run,  
Their grief unfinish'd with the setting sun :  
But checking the full torrent in its flow,  
The Prince thus interrupts the solemn woe. 245

“ Qualis populeā mōrens Philomela sub umbrā  
“ Amissos queritur fœtus, quos durus arator  
“ Observans nido implumes detraxit : at illa  
“ Flet noctem, &c.

Nothing can be sweeter than this comparison of *Virgil*, but the learned *Huetius* thinks he has found a notorious blunder in it: this nightingale (says he) in the first line sits in the shade of a poplar, and yet in the fourth she mourns by night, *flet noctem*. It is evident that Monsieur *Huet* mistakes the word *umbra* for the shade of a tree, which it casts while the sun shines upon it; whereas it only means that the bird sings *sub foliis*, or conceal'd in the leaves of it, which may be done by night as well as by day: but if it be thought that this is not a sufficient answer, the passage may be thus understood: the nightingale mourning under the shade of a poplar, &c. ceases not all night, or *flet noctem*; that is, she begins her song in the evening by day, but mourns all night. Either of these answers are sufficient for *Virgil's* vindication.

¶. 245. *The Prince thus interrupts the solemn woe.*] It does not appear at first view why the Poet makes *Telemachus* recover himself from his transport of sorrow sooner than *Ulysses*: is *Telemachus* a greater master of his passions? or is it to convince *Ulysses* of his son's wisdom, as *Eustathius* conjectures? this can scarce be suppos'd, *Ulysses* being superior in wisdom. I would chuse rather to ascribe it to human nature; for it has been observed, that affection seldom so strongly ascends, as it descends; the child seldom loves the father so tenderly, as the father the child: this observation has been made from the remotest Antiquity. And it is wisely designed by the great Author of our Natures; for in the common course of life, the



## 86 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xvi.

What ship transported thee, O father say,  
And what blest hands have oar'd thee on the way ?

All, all (*Ulysses* instant made reply)  
I tell thee all, my child, my only joy !  
*Phæacians* bore me to the port assign'd, 250  
A nation ever to the stranger kind ;  
Wrapt in the embrace of sleep, the faithful train  
O'er seas convey'd me to my native reign :  
Embroider'd vestures, gold, and brass are laid  
Conceal'd in caverns in the silvan shade. 255  
Hither, intent the rival rout to slay  
And plan the scene of death, I bend my way :  
So *Pallas* wills — but thou, my son, explain  
The names, and numbers of th' audacious train ;  
Tis mine to judge if better to employ 260  
Assistant force, or singly to destroy.

child must bury the parent; it is therefore a merciful dispensation, that the tie of blood and affection should be loosened by degrees, and not torn violently asunder in the full strength of it. It is expected that aged persons should die, their loss therefore grows more familiar to us, and it loses much of its horrour through the long expectation of it.

y. 250. *Phæacians bore me to the port assign'd.*] Here is a repetition of what the Reader knows entirely, from many parts of the preceding story; but it being necessary in this place, the Poet judiciously reduces it into the compass of six lines, and by this method avoids prolixity. *Eustathius.*



BOOK XVI. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 87

O'er earth (returns the Prince) resounds thy name,

Thy well-try'd wisdom, and thy martial fame,  
Yet at thy words I start, in wonder lost ;  
Can we engage, not decadz, but an host ? 265  
Can we alone in furious battle stand,  
Against that num'rous, and determin'd band ?  
Hear then their numbers : From *Dulichium* came  
Twice twenty-six, all peers of mighty name,  
Six are their menial train : twice twelve the  
boast 270

Of *Samos* ; twenty from *Zacynthus* coast :

¶. 268. *Hear then their numbers ——*] According to this catalogue, the Suitors with their attendants (the two sewers, and *Medon*, and *Phemius*) are a hundred and eighteen ; but the two last are not to be taken for the enemies of *Ulysses* ; and therefore are not involved in their punishment in the conclusion of the *Odysssey*. *Eustathius*.

*Spondanus* mistakes this passage egregiously.

Μέδων κῆρυξ καὶ θεῖος αὐτόδος.

He understands it thus, “ *Medon* who was an Herald and a “ divine bard.” *Præco unus qui & idem Musicus* : it is true, the construction will bear this interpretation ; but it is evident from the latter part of the xxiid *Odysssey*, that the *Κῆρυξ* and the *Αὐτόδος* were two persons, namely, *Medon* and *Phemius* : *Medon* acts all along as a friend to *Penelope* and *Telemachus*, and *Phemius* is affirmed to be detained by the Suitors involuntarily, and consequently they are both guiltless.



88 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xvi.

And twelve our country's pride ; to these belong  
*Medon* and *Pbemius* skill'd in heav'nly song.

Two few'r's from day to day the revels wait,  
Exact of taste, and serve the feast in state. 275

With such a foe th' unequal fight to try,  
Were by false courage unreveng'd to die.

Then what assistant pow'r's you boast, relate,  
Ere yet we mingle in the stern debate. 279

Mark well my voice, *Ulysses* straight replies :  
What need of aids, if favour'd by the skies ?  
If shielded to the dreadful fight we move,  
By mighty *Pallas*, and by thund'ring *Jove*.

Sufficient they (*Telemachus* rejoin'd)  
Against the banded pow'r's of all mankind : 285  
They, high enthron'd above the rolling clouds,  
Wither the strength of man, and awe the Gods.

Such aids expect, he cries, when strong in  
might

We rise terrifick to the task of fight.

y. 288. Such aids expect, he cries, when strong in might  
We rise terrifick to the task of fight.]

This whole discourse between *Ulysses* and *Telemachus* is introduced to prepare the Reader for the Catastrophe of the Poem :



## BOOK XVI. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 89

But thou, when morn salutes th' aerial plain, 290

The court revisit and the lawless train :

*Homer* judiciously interests Heaven in the cause, that the Reader may not be surprised at the event, when he sees such numbers fall by the hands of these Heroes ; he consults probability, and as the Poem now draws to a conclusion, sets the assistance of Heaven full before the Reader.

It is likewise very artful to let us into some knowledge of the event of the Poem ; all care must be taken that it be rather guessed than known. If it be entirely known, the Reader finds nothing new to awaken his attention ; if on the contrary it be so intricate, that the event cannot possibly be guessed at, we wander in the dark, and are lost in uncertainty. The art of the Poet consists not in concealing the event intirely : but when it is in some measure foreseen, in introducing such a number of incidents that now bring us almost into the sight of it, then by new obstacles perplex the story to the very conclusion of the Poem ; every obstacle, and every removal of it fills us with surprise, with pleasure or pain alternately, and consequently calls up our whole attention. This is admirably described by *Vida*, lib. ii.

“ — — — Eventus nonnullis sœpe canendo  
“ Indiciis porrò ostendunt, in luce malignâ  
“ Sublustrique ; aliquid dant cernere noctis in umbrâ.”

Th' event should glimmer with a dubious ray,  
Not hid in clouds nor glare in open day.

This rule he afterwards illustrates by a very happy similitude.

“ Haud aliter longinqua petit qui forte viator  
“ Mænia, si positas altis in collibus arces  
“ Nunc etiam dubias oculis videt, incipit ultiro  
“ Lætior ire viam, placidumque urgere laborem,  
“ Quàm cùm nusquam ullæ cernuntur quas adit arces,  
“ Obscurum sed iter tendit convallibus imis.”



## 90 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xvi.

Me thither in disguise *Eumæus* leads,  
An aged mendicant in tatter'd weeds.  
There, if base scorn insult my rev'rend age ;  
Bear it my son ! repress thy rising rage.      295  
If outrag'd, cease that outrage to repel ;  
Bear it my son ! howe'er thy heart rebel.

The conduct both of *Virgil* and *Homer* are agreeable to this observation ; for instance, *Anchises* and *Tiresias* in the shades, foretel *Aeneas* and *Ulysses* that all their troubles shall end prosperously, that the one shall found the *Roman* Empire, the other regain his kingdoms ; but the means being kept concealed, our appetite is rather whetted than cloyed, to know by what means these events are brought about : thus, as in *Vida*'s allusion, they shew us the City at a great distance, but how we are to arrive at it, by what roads they intend to guide us to it, this they keep concealed ; the journey discovers itself, and every step we advance leads us forward, and shews where we are to take the next : neither does the Poet directly lead us in the straight path : sometimes we are as it were in a labyrinth, and we know not how to extricate ourselves out of it ; sometimes he carries us into bye-ways, and we almost lose sight of the direct way, and then suddenly they open into the chief road, and convey us to the journey's end. In this consists the skill of the Poet ; he must form probable intricacies, and then solve them probably ; he must set his Hero in dangers, and then bring him out of them with honour. This observation is necessary to be applied to all those passages in the *Odysssey*, where the event of it is obscurely foretold, and which some tasteless Critics have blam'd, as taking away the curiosity of the Reader by an unseasonable discovery.

y. 296. If outrag'd, cease that outrage to repel,  
Bear it my son ! howe'er thy heart rebel. }



BOOK XVI. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 91

Yet strive by pray'r and counsel to restrain  
Their lawless insults, tho' thou strive in vain :  
For wicked ears are deaf to wisdom's call, 300  
And vengeance strikes whom heav'n has doom'd  
to fall.

Once more attend : When \* she whose pow'r  
inspires

The thinking mind, my soul to vengeance fires ;  
I give the sign : that, instant from beneath,  
Aloft convey the instruments of death, 305

*Plutarch* in his Treatise upon reading Poems, observes the wisdom of *Ulysses* in these instructions : he is the person who is more immediately injured, yet he not only restrains his own resentment, but that of *Telemachus* : he perceives that his son is in danger of flying out into some passion, he therefore very wisely arms him against it. Men do not put bridles upon horses when they are already running with full speed, but they bridle them before they bring them out to the race : this very well illustrates the conduct of *Ulysses* ; he fears the youth of *Telemachus* may be too warm, and through an unseasonable ardour at the sight of his wrongs, betray him to his enemies ; he therefore persuades him to patience and calmness, and predisposes his mind with rational considerations to enable him to encounter his passions, and govern his resentment.

\* *Minerva*.

¶. 304. — — — Toat instant, from beneath,  
Aloft convey the instruments of death.]

These ten lines occur in the beginning of the nineteenth book, and the antiquits (as *Eustathius* informs us) were of opinion, that they are here placed improperly ; for how, say they, should



92 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xvi.

Armour and arms ; and if mistrust arise,  
Thus veil the truth in plausible disguise.

" These glitt'ring weapons, ere he fail'd to

" *Troy,*

" *Ulysses* view'd with stern heroic joy :

" Then, beaming o'er th' illumin'd wall they  
shone : 310

" Now dust dishonours, all their lustre gone.

" I bear them hence (so *Jove* my soul inspires)  
From the pollution of the fuming fires ;

" Lest when the bowl inflames, in vengeful  
mood

" Ye rush to arms, and stain the feast with  
blood ; 315

" Oft ready swords in luckless hour incite

" The hand of wrath, and arm it for the fight."

*Ulysses* know that the arms were in a lower apartment, when he was in the country, and had not yet seen his Palace ? But this is no real objection ; his repository of arms he knew was in the lower apartment, and therefore it was rational to conclude that the arms were in it. The verses are proper in both places ; here *Ulysses* prepares *Telemachus* against the time of the execution of his designs ; in the nineteenth book that time is come, and therefore he repeats his instructions.

¶. 316. *Oft ready swords in luckless hour incite  
The hand of wrath, and arm it for the fight.*



## BOOK XVI. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 93

Such be the plea, and by the plea deceive:  
For *Jove* infatuates all, and all believe.  
Yet leave for each of us a sword to wield, 320  
A pointed jav'lin, and a fenceful shield.  
But by my blood that in thy bosom glows,  
By that regard a son his father owes ;  
The secret, that thy father lives, retain  
Lock'd in thy bosom from the household train ; 325

This seems to have been a proverbial expression, at least it has been so used by latter writers : the observation holds true to this day, and it is manifest that more men fall by the sword in countries where the inhabitants daily wear swords, than in those where a sword is thought no part of dress or ornament. *Dacier.*

\*. 324. *The secret, that thy father lives, retain  
Lock'd in thy bosom — ]*

This injunction of secrecy is introduced by *Ulysses* with the utmost solemnity ; and it was very necessary that it should be so ; the whole hopes of his re-establishment depending upon it : besides, this behaviour agrees with the character of *Ulysses*, which is remarkable for disguise and concealment. The Poet makes a further use of it ; namely, to give him an opportunity to describe at large the several discoveries made to *Penelope*, *Laertes*, and *Telemachus* personally by *Ulysses*, in the sequel of the *Odyssey*, which are no small ornaments to it ; yet must have been omitted, or have lost their effect, if the return of *Ulysses* had been made known by *Telemachus* ; this would have been like discovering the plot before the beginning of the play. At the same time this direction is an excellent rule to be observed in management of all weighty affairs, the success of which chiefly depends upon secrecy.



94 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xvi.

Hide it from all ; ev'n from *Eumæus* hide,  
From my dear father, and my dearer bride.  
**One** care remains, to note the loyal few  
Whose faith yet lasts among the menial crew ;  
**And** noting, ere we rise in vengeance, prove 330  
**Who** loves his Prince ; for sure you merit love.

To whom the youth : to emulate I aim  
The brave and wise, and my great father's  
fame.

But re-consider, since the wisest err,  
Veng'ance resolv'd, 'tis dang'rous to defer. 335  
What length of time must we consume in vain,  
Too curious to explore the menial train ?  
While the proud foes, industrious to defroy  
Thy wealth in riot, the delay enjoy.  
Suffice it in this exigence alone 340

To mark the damsels that attend the throne :

\*. 334. *But re-consider — ]* The Poet here describes *Telemachus* rectifying the judgment of *Ulysses*; is this any disparagement to that Hero? It is not; but an exact representation of human nature; for the wisest men may receive, in particular cases, instructions from men less wise; and the eye of the understanding in a young man, may sometimes see further than that of age; that is, in the language of the Poet, a wise and mature *Ulysses* may sometimes be instructed by a young and unexperienced *Telemachus*.



BOOK XVI. HOMER'S. ODYSSEY. 95

Dispers'd the youth resides ; their faith to prove  
Jove grants henceforth, if thou hast spoke from  
Jove.

While in debate they waste the hours away,  
Th' associates of the Prince repass'd the bay ; 345

¶. 343. *If thou hast spoke from Jove.*] The expression in the Greek is obscure, and it may be asked, to what refers Διὸς τέρας ? Dacier renders it, *S' il vray que vous ayez vu un Prodige*; or “ if it be true that you have seen a prodigy :” now there is no mention of any prodigy seen by *Ulysses* in all this interview, and this occasions the obscurity ; but it is implied, for *Ulysses* directly promises the assistance of *Jupiter* ; and how could he depend upon it, but by some prodigy from *Jupiter*? *Eustathius* thus understands the words : Τέρας, οὗτος ἡ ὀρμώμενος ἐφη, ἀμύνθετα τὰ Διὰ ιμᾶτα σεσδαιται. And then the meaning will be, “ If “ the prodigy from *Jupiter* be evident, there is no occasion “ to concern ourselves about the household train.” But then does not that expression imply doubt, and a jealousy, that *Ulysses* might possibly depend too much upon supernatural assistance ? It only insinuates, that he ought to be certain in the interpretation of the prodigy, but *Telemachus* refers himself intirely to *Ulysses*, and acquiesces in his judgment.

¶. 345. *Th' associates of the Prince repass'd the bay.*] It is manifest that this vessel had spent the evening of the preceding day, the whole night and part of the next morning, in sailing from the place where *Telemachus* embarked : for it is necessary to remember that *Telemachus*, to avoid the Suitors, had been obliged to fetch a large compass, and land upon the northern coast of *Ithaca* ; and consequently the vessel was necessitated to double the whole Isle on the western side to reach the *Ithacan* bay. This is the reason that it arrives not till the day afterwards, and that the Herald dispatched by the associates of *Telemachus*, and *Eumeus* from the country, meet upon the road, as they go to carry the news of the return



## 96 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xvi.

With speed they guide the vessel to the shores ;  
With speed debarking land the naval stores ;  
Then faithful to their charge, to *Clytius* bear,  
And trust the presents to his friendly care.

Swift to the Queen a Herald flies t' impart 350  
Her son's return, and ease a parent's heart ;  
Lest a sad prey to ever-musing cares,  
Pale grief destroy what time a-while forbears.

Th' uncautious Herald with impatience burns,  
And cries aloud ; Thy son, oh Queen, returns : 355  
of *Telemachus* to *Penelope*. It is likewise evident that the lodge  
of *Eumæus* was not far distant from the palace ; for he sets out  
toward the City after eating in the morning, and passing some  
time in conference with *Telemachus*, delivers his message, and  
returns in the evening of the same day.

y. 355. *And cries aloud ; Thy son, oh Queen, returns.*] This  
little circumstance distinguishes characters, and gives variety  
to Poetry : it is a kind of painting, which always varies its  
figures by some particular ornament, or attitude, so as no  
two figures are alike : the contrary conduct would make an  
equal confusion both in Poetry and Painting, and an indi-  
stinction of persons and characters. I will not promise that  
these particularities are of equal beauty, as necessity, especially  
in modern languages ; the *Greek* is always flowing, sonorous,  
and harmonious ; the language, like leaves, oftentimes con-  
ceals barrenness, and a want of fruit, and renders the sense at  
least beautiful, if not profitable ; this is wanted in some de-  
gree in *English* Poetry, where it is not always in our power  
to conceal the nakedness with ornaments : this particularity  
before us is of absolute necessity, and could not well be  
avoided ; the indiscretion of the Herald in speaking aloud,



BOOK XVI. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 97

*Eumeus* sage approach'd th' imperial throne,  
And breath'd his mandate to her ear alone,  
Then measur'd back the way — The suitor band  
Stung to the soul, abash'd, confounded stand ;  
And issuing from the dome, before the gate, 360  
With clouded looks, a pale assembly sat.

At length *Eurymachus*. Our hopes are vain ;  
*Telemachus* in triumph fails the main.  
Haste, rear the mast, the swelling shroud display ;  
Haste, to our ambush'd friends the news con-  
vey ! 365

Scarce had he spoke, when turning to the strand  
*Amphinomus* survey'd th' associate band ;  
Full to the bay within the winding shores  
With gather'd sails they stood, and lifted oars.  
O friends ! he cry'd, elate with rising joy, 370  
See to the port secure the vessel fly !  
Some God has told them, or themselves survey  
The bark escap'd ; and measure back their way.

discovers the return of *Telemachus* to the Suitors, and is the incident that brings about their following debates, and furnishes out the entertainment of the succeeding part of this book.



98 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xvi.

Swift at the word descending to the shores,  
They moor the vessel and unlade the stores : 375  
Then moving from the strand, apart they sat,  
And full and frequent, form'd a dire debate.

Lives then the boy ? he lives (*Antinous* cries)  
The care of Gods and fav'rite of the skies.  
All night we watch'd, till with her orient wheels  
*Aurora* flam'd above the eastern hills, 381  
And from the lofty brow of rocks by day  
Took-in the ocean with a broad survey :  
Yet safe he fails ! the pow'rs cœlest give  
To shun the hidden snares of death, and live. 385  
But die he shall, and thus condemn'd to bleed,  
Be now the scene of instant death decreed :  
Hope ye success ? undaunted crush the foe.  
Is he not wise ? know this, and strike the blow.  
Wait ye, till he to arms in council draws 390  
The Greeks, averse too justly to our cause ?

v. 391. *The Greeks averse too justly to our cause.*] This verse is inserted with great Judgment, and gives an air of probability to the whole relation ; for if it be asked why the Suitors defer to seize the supreme power, and to murder *Telemachus*, they being so superior in number ? *Antinous* himself answers, that they fear the people, who favour the cause of *Telemachus*, and would revenge his injuries : it is for this reason that they



## BOOK XVI. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 99

Strike, ere, the States conven'd, the foe betray  
Our murd'rous ambush on the wat'ry way.

formed the ambush by sea ; and for this reason *Antinous* proposes to intercept him in his return from the country : they dare not offer open violence, and therefore make use of treachery. This speech of *Antinous* forms a short under-plot to the Poem ; it gives us pain (says *Eustathius*) for *Telemachus*, and holds us in suspense till the intricacy is unravelled by *Amphinomus*.

The whole harangue is admirable in *Homer*: the diction is excellently suited to the temper of *Antinous*, who speaks with precipitation : his mind is in agitation and disorder, and consequently his language is abrupt, and not allowing himself time to explain his thoughts at full length, he falls into ellipses and abbreviations. For instance, he is to speak against *Telemachus*, but his contempt and resentment will not permit him to mention his name, he therefore calls him τὸν ἄνδρα ; thus in μήτι πακὸς γέζωσι, δέδοικα is understood, thus likewise in this verse,

'Αλλ' ἀγετε ωρὶς κεῖνον ὅμηρυρίσασθαι 'Αχαιῶς  
'Εις ἀγορῆν —————

the word ὁλοθρεύσωμεν, or ἀνέλωμεν, must be understood, to make the sense intelligible. Thus also after οἱ δὲ ὑπὸν ὅδε μῆθος ἀφανδάνει, to make 'Αλλὰ in the next sentence begin it significantly, we must supply καὶ σὸν δοκεῖ παλὸν ὁ φόνος ; then the sense is complete ; *If this opinion displease, and his death appear not honourable, but you would have him live, &c.* otherwise ἀλλὰ βέλισθε must be construed like βέλισθε δὲ ; and lastly, to image the disorder of *Antinous* more strongly, *Homer* inserts a false quantity, by making the first syllable in βέλισθε short. *Antinous* attends not, through the violence of his spirit, to the words he utters, and therefore falls into this error, which excellently represents it. It is impossible to retain these Ellipses in the translation, but I have endeavoured to shew the warmth of the speaker, by putting the words into Interrogations, which are always uttered with vehemence, and signs of hurry and precipitation.



100 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xvi.

Or chuse ye vagrant from their rage to fly  
Outcasts of earth, to breathe an unknown  
sky ?

395

The brave prevent misfortune ; then be brave,  
And bury future danger in his grave.  
Returns he ? ambush'd well his walk invade,  
Or where he hides in solitude and shade :  
And give the Palace to the Queen a dow'r, 400  
Or him she blesses in the bridal hour.  
But if submissive you resign the sway,  
Slaves to a boy ; go, flatter and obey.  
Retire we instant to our native reign,  
Nor be the wealth of Kings consum'd in vain ; 405  
Then wed whom choice approves : the Queen be  
giv'n

To some blest Prince, the Prince decreed by  
Heav'n.

Abash'd, the suitor train his voice attends ;  
'Till from his throne *Amphinomus* ascends,  
Who o'er *Dulickium* stretch'd his spacious  
reign,

410

A land of plenty, blest with ev'ry grain :



## BOOK XVI. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 101

Chief of the numbers who the Queen addreſt,  
And tho' displeasing, yet displeasing leaſt.  
Soft were his words; his actions wiſdom ſway'd;  
Graceful a-while he paus'd, then mildly ſaid. 415

O friends forbear! and be the thought with-  
ſtood:

'Tis horrible to ſhed imperial blood!  
Consult we firſt th' all-ſeeing pow'rs above,  
And the ſure oracles of righteous Jove.

¶. 413. *And tho' displeasing, yet displeasing leaſt.*] We are not to gather from this exprefſion, that *Penelopé* had any particular tenderness for *Amphinomus*, but it means only that he was a person of ſome justice and moderation. At firſt view, there ſeems no reafon why the Poet ſhould diſtinguiſh *Amphinomus* from the reſt of the Suitors, by giving him this humane character; but in reality there is an abſolute neceſſity for it. *Telemachus* is doomed to die by *Antinous*: here is an intricacy formed, and how is that Hero to be preſerved with probability? The Poet aſcribes a greater degree of tenderness and moderation to one of the Suitors, and by this method preſerves *Telemachus*. Thus we ſee the leaſt circumſtance in *Homer* has its uſe and effect; the art of a good Painter is viſible in the ſinaleſt ſketch, as well as in the laſteſt draught.

¶. 419. *And the ſure oracles of righteous Jove.*] *Strabo*, lib. vii. quotes this verſe of *Homer*, and tells us that ſome Criticks thus read it.

Εἴ μὲν καὶ αἰνῆσσοι Διὸς μεγάλου τομῆροι.

preferring *τομῆροι* to *θέμιτες*; for, add they, *θέμιτες* no where in *Homer* ſignifies Oracles, but conſtantly laws or counſils. *Tmarus* or *Tomarus* was a mountain on which the oracle of



102 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xvi.

If they assent, ev'n by this hand he dies ;      420  
If they forbid, I war not with the skies.

He said : The rival train his voice approv'd,  
And rising instant to the Palace mov'd.  
Arriv'd, with wild tumultuous noise they sat,  
Recumbent on the shining thrones of state. 425

*Jupiter* stood, and in process of time it was used to denote the Oracles themselves. Τόμερος is formed like the word ὁικερὸς, the former signifies *custos Tmari*, the latter *custos domus* : in this sense *Amphionius* advises to consult the *Dodonian* Oracles, which were given from the mountain *Tmarus* : but, adds *Strabo*, *Homer* is to be understood more plainly ; and by Σέμιστες, the councils, the will and decisions of the Oracles are implied, for those decisions were held as laws ; thus βαλλεῖν, as well as Σέμιστες, signifies the *Dodonian* Oracles.

Ἐκ δευτὸς ἴψικόμονοι Διὸς βαλλὲι πάχθοσι.

Neither is it true (observes the Scholiast upon *Strabo*) that Σέμιστες never signifies oracles in *Homer* : for in the Hymn to *Apollo*, (and *Thucydides* quotes that hymn as *Homer's*) the Poet thus uses it,

— — — αἰγύελλωσι Σέμιστες  
Φοίβε 'Απόλλωνος — —

*Strabo* himself uses Σέμιστεῖν in this sense, lib. xvii. and in the Oracles that are yet extant, Σέμιστεῖν frequently signifies *oracula reddere* : and in *Aelian* (continues the Scholiast) lib. iii. chap. 43, 44. εἰ σὲ Σέμιστεῖσο, signifies *non tibi oracula reddam* ; and *Hesychius* renders Σέμιστες, by μαντεῖα, χειροσημεῖα, Prophecy or Oracles.



Then *Medon*, conscious of their dire debates,  
The murd'rous council to the Queen relates.

v. 426. —— *Medon, conscious of their dire debates.*] After this Verse *Eustathius* recites one that is omitted in most of the late editions as spurious, at least improper.

*Αὐλῆς ἔκτος ἔων, οἱ δὲ ἐνδόθε μῆτρες ὑφαίνου.*

That is, *Medon* was out of the court, whereas the Suitors formed their council within it: the line is really to be suspected; for a little above, *Homer* directly tells us, that the Suitors left the Palace.

Then issuing from the dome, before the gate,  
With clouded looks, a pale assembly sat.

It is likewise very evident that they stood in the open air, for they discover the ship returning from the ambush, and sailing into the bay. How then can it be said of the Suitors, that they formed their assembly in the court, *οἱ δὲ ἐνδόθε μῆτρες ὑφαίνου*. Besides, continues *Dacier*, they left the palace, and placed themselves under the lofty wall of it.

*'Εκ δὲ ἡλύθον μεγάφοιο, παρὶ μέγα τεχίον αὐλῆς.*

How then is it possible to see the ship entering the port, when this wall must necessarily obstruct the sight: the two verses therefore evidently contradict themselves, and one of them must consequently be rejected: she would have the line read thus;

*Αὐλῆς ἔθος ἔων, οἱ δὲ ἐξιόθε, &c.*

But all the difficulty vanishes by taking *Aὐλή*, as it is frequently used, to denote any place open to the air, and consequently not the court, but the court-yard, and this is the proper signification of the word. Then *Medon* may stand on the outside of the wall of the court-yard, *Aὐλῆς ἔκτος*, and over-hear the debates of the Suitors who form their council within it, or *ἐνδόθε μῆτρες ὑφαίνου*. And as for the wall intercepting the view of the Suitors, this is merely conjecture; and it is more rational



104 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xvi.

Touch'd at the dreadful story she descends :  
Her hasty steps a damsel-train attends. 129

Full where the dome its shining valves expands,  
Sudden before the rival pow'rs she stands :  
And veiling decent with a modest shade  
Her cheek, indignant to *Antinous* said :

O void of faith ! of all bad men the worst !  
Renown'd for wisdom, by th' abuse accrû'd ! 435  
Mistaking fame proclaims thy gen'rous mind !  
Thy deeds denote thee of the basest kind.  
Wretch ! to destroy a Prince that friendship  
gives,

While in his guest his murd'rer he receives :  
Nor dread superior *Jove*, to whom belong 440  
The cause of suppliants, and revenge of wrong.  
Hast thou forgot, (ingrateful as thou art)  
Who sav'd thy father with a friendly part ?  
Lawless he ravag'd with his martial pow'rs  
The *Taphyan* pirates on *Thesprotia*'s shores ; 445

to imagine that the court-yard was open sea-ward, that so beautiful a prospect as the ocean might not be shut up from the palace of a King ; or at least, the palace might stand upon such an eminence as to command the ocean.



## BOOK XVI. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 105

Enrag'd, his life, his treasures they demand ;  
*Ulysses* fav'd him from th' avenger's hand.  
And would'st thou evil for his good repay ?  
His bed dishonour, and his houfe betray ? 449  
Afflict his Queen ? and with a murd'rous hand  
Destroy his heir ?—but cease, 'tis I command.

Far hence those fears, (*Eurymachus* reply'd)  
O prudent Princess ! bid thy foul confide.

¶. 447. — — *From th' avenger's hand.]* This whole passage is thus understood by *Eustathius*; By δῆμος Ἰθαγίων, Homer means the *Ithacans*; and he likewise affirms, that the people who demanded vengeance of *Ulysses* were also the *Ithacans*. It is not here translated in this sense, the construction rather requires it to be understood of the *Thesprotians*, who were allies of *Ulysses*, and by virtue of that alliance demanded *Eupitheüs*, the Father of *Antinous*, out of the hands of *Ulysses*. But I submit to the Reader's judgment.

¶. 449. *His bed dishonour, and his house betray ?*  
*Afflict his Queen ? &c.]*

It is observable, that *Penelope* in the compass of two lines recites four heads of her complaint; such contractions of thought and expression being natural to persons in anger, as *Eustathius* observes; she speaks with heat, and consequently starts from thought to thought with precipitation. The whole speech is animated with a generous resentment, and she concludes at once like a Mother and a Queen; like a Mother, with affection for *Telemachus*; and like a Queen with authority, παισαρδας κέλευσι.

¶. 452. — — (*Eurymachus* reply'd.) This whole discourse of *Eurymachus* is to be understood by way of contrariety: there is an obvious and a latent Interpretation; for instance, when he says,



106 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xvi.

Breathes there a man who dares that Hero slay,  
While I behold the golden light of day? . 455

No: by the righteous pow'rs of heav'n I swear,  
His blood in vengeance smokes upon my spear.

*Ulysses*, when my infant days I led,  
With wine suffic'd me, and with dainties fed:  
My gen'rous soul abhors th' ungrateful part, 460  
And my friend's son lives dearest to my heart.  
Then fear no mortal arm: if heav'n destroy,  
We must resign: for man is born to die.

His blood in vengeance smokes upon my spear;  
it obviously means the blood of the person who offers violence  
to *Telemachus*; but it may likewise mean the blood of *Telemachus*, and the construction admits both interpretations: thus also when he says, that no person shall lay hands upon *Telemachus*, while he is alive, he means that he will do it himself: and lastly, when he adds,

Then fear no mortal arm: if heav'n destroy,  
We must resign; for Man is born to die.

The apparent signification is, that *Telemachus* has occasion only to fear a natural death; but he means if the oracle of *Jupiter* commands them to destroy *Telemachus*, that then the Suitors will take away his life. He alludes to the foregoing speech of *Amphinomus*:

Consult we first th' all-seeing pow'rs above,  
And the sure oracles of righteous *Jove*.  
If they assent, ev'n by this hand he dies;  
If they forbid, I war not with the skies.

*Eustathius.*



BOOK XVI. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 107

Thus smooth he ended, yet his death conspir'd :  
Then sorrowing, with sad step the Queen retir'd,  
With streaming eyes all comfortless deplo'rd, 466  
Touch'd with the dear remembrance of her Lord ;  
Nor ceas'd, till *Pallas* bid her sorrows fly,  
And in soft slumber seal'd her flowing eye.

And now *Eumæus*, at the ev'ning hour, 470  
Came late returning to his silvan bow'r.  
*Ulysses* and his son had drest with art  
A yearling boar, and gave the Gods their part,  
Holy repast ! That instant from the skies  
The martial Goddess to *Ulysses* flies : 475  
She waves her golden wand, and reassumes  
From ev'ry feature every grace that blooms ;  
At once his vesture change ; at once she sheds  
Age o'er his limbs, that tremble as he treads.  
Left to the Queen the swain with transport fly, 480  
Unable to contain th' unruly joy.

When near he drew, the Prince breaks forth ;  
proclaim  
What tidings, friends ? what speaks the voice of  
fame ?



108 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xvi.

Say, if the Suitors measure back the main,  
Or still in ambush thirst for blood in vain ? 485  
Whether, he cries, they measure back the flood,  
Or still in ambush thirst in vain for blood,  
Escap'd my care : where lawless Suitors sway,  
Thy mandate born, my soul disdain'd to stay.  
But from th' *Hermæan* height I cast a view, 490  
Where to the port a bark high bounding flew ;

¶. 490. *From th' Hermæan height — —*] It would be superfluous to translate all the various interpretations of this passage ; it will be sufficiently intelligible to the Reader, if he looks upon it only to imply that there was an hill in *Ithaca* called the *Hermæan* hill, either because there was a Temple, Statue, or Altar of *Mercury* upon it ; and so called from that Deity.

It has been written that *Mercury* being the Messenger of the Gods, in his frequent journeys cleared the roads, and when he found any stones he threw them in an heap out of the way, and these heaps were called *ερμανοι*, or *Mercuries*. The circumstance of his clearing the roads is somewhat odd ; but why might not *Mercury* as well as *Trivia* preside over them, and have his images erected in publick ways, because he was supposed to frequent them as the messenger of the Gods ?

This book takes up no more time than the space of the thirty-eighth day ; for *Telemachus* reaches the lodge of *Eumæus* in the morning, a little after he dispatches *Eumæus* to *Penelope*, who returns in the evening of the same day. The book in general is very beautiful in the original ; the discovery of *Ulysses* to *Telemachus* is particularly tender and affecting : it has some resemblance with that of *Joseph*'s discovery of himself to



## BOOK XVI. HOMER'S ODYSSEY: 109

Her freight a shining band : with martial air  
Each pois'd his shield, and each advanc'd his  
spear :

And if aright these searching eyes survey,  
Th' eluded Suitors stem the wat'ry way. 495

The Prince, well pleas'd to disappoint their  
wiles,

Steals on his Sire a glance, and secret smiles.

his brethren, and it may not perhaps be disagreeable to see  
how two such Authors describe the same passion,

*I am Joseph, I am your brother Joseph.*

*I am Ulysses, I, my Son ! am he !*

*and he wept aloud, and he fell on his brother's neck and wept.*

*He wept abundant, and he wept aloud.*

But it must be owned that *Homer* falls infinitely short of *Moses*: he must be a very wicked man, that can read the history of *Joseph* without the utmost touches of compassion and transport. There is a majestick simplicity in the whole relation, and such an affecting portrait of human nature, that it overwhelms us with vicissitudes of joy and sorrow. This is a pregnant instance how much the best of heathen Writers is inferior to the divine Historian upon a parallel subject, where the two Authors endeavour to move the softer passions. The same may with equal truth be said in respect to Sublimity; not only in the instance produced by *Longinus*, viz. *Let there be light, and there was light. Let the earth be made, and the earth was made*: but in general, in the more elevated parts of Scripture, and particularly the whole book of *Job*; which, with regard both to sublimity of thought, and morality, exceeds beyond all comparison the most noble parts of *Homer*.



110 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xvi.

And now a short repast prepar'd, they fed,  
'Till the keen rage of craving hunger fled :  
Then to repose withdrawn, apart they lay, 500  
And in soft sleep forgot the cares of day.





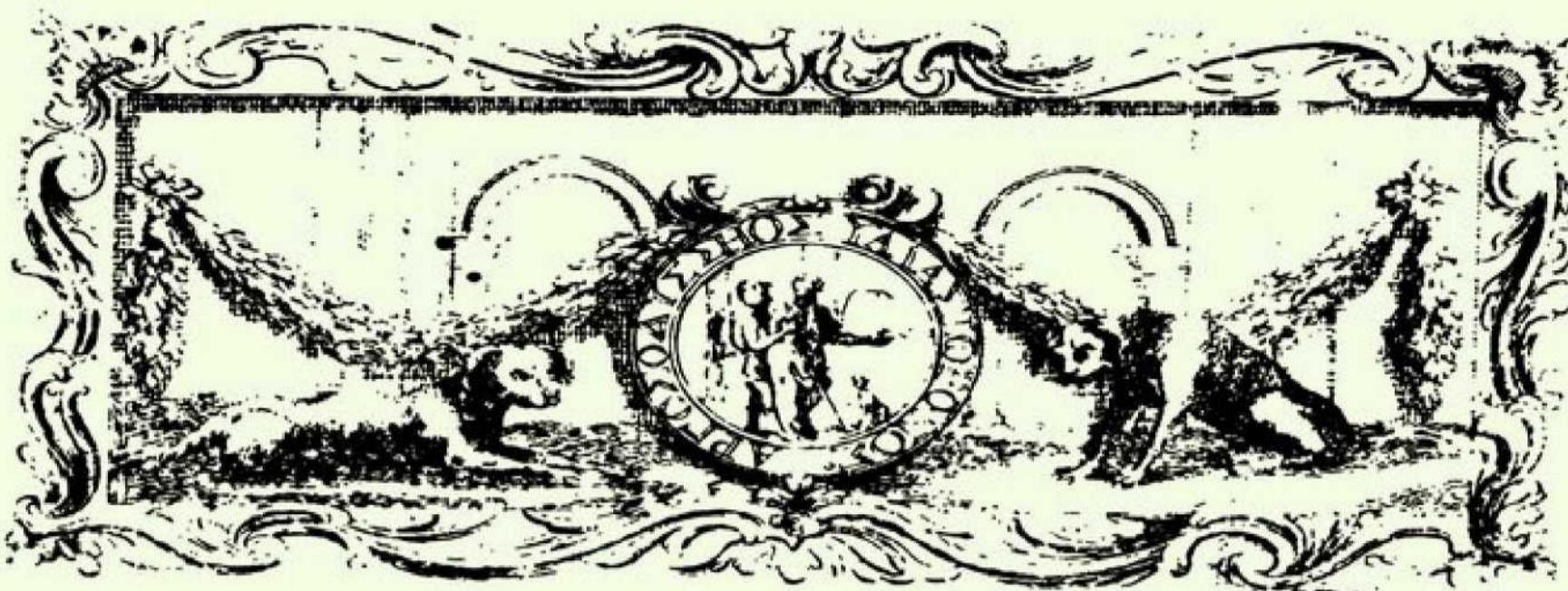
THE  
SEVENTEENTH BOOK  
OF THE  
ODYSSEY.





## The A R G U M E N T.

**T**ELEMACHUS returning to the City, relates to Penelope the sum of his travels. Ulysses is conducted by Eumæus to the Palace, where his old dog Argus acknowledges his Master, after an absence of twenty years, and dies with joy. Eumæus returns into the country, and Ulysses remains among the Suitors, whose behaviour is described.



THE  
SEVENTEENTH BOOK  
OF THE  
ODYSSEY.

SOON as *Aurora*, daughter of the dawn,  
Sprinkled with roseate light the dewy lawn;  
In haste the Prince arose, prepar'd to part;  
His hand impatient grasps the pointed dart;  
Fair on his feet the polish'd sandals shine,      5  
And thus he greets the master of the swine.

My friend adieu; let this short stay suffice;  
I haste to meet my mother's longing eyes,      }  
And end her tears, her sorrows, and her sighs.      }

¶. 8. *I haste to meet my mother's longing eyes.*] There are two reasons for the return of *Telemachus*; one, the duty a son



114 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xvii.

But thou attentive, what we order heed ;      10  
This hapless stranger to the city lead ;  
By publick bounty let him there be fed,  
And bless the hand that stretches forth the bread.  
To wipe the tears from all afflicted eyes,  
My will may covet, but my pow'r denies.      15

owes to a mother ; the other, to find an opportunity to put in execution the designs concerted with *Ulysses* : the Poet therefore shifts the scene from the Lodge to the Palace. *Telemachus* takes not *Ulysses* along with him, for fear he should raise suspicion in the Suitors, that a person in a beggar's garb has some secret merit, to obtain the familiarity of a King's son, and this might be an occasion of a discovery ; whereas when *Ulysses* afterwards appears amongst the Suitors, he is thought to be an entire stranger to *Telemachus*, which prevents all jealousy, and gives them an opportunity to carry on their measures, without any particular observation. Besides, *Eumeus* is still to be kept in ignorance concerning the person of *Ulysses* ; *Telemachus* therefore gives him a plausible reason for his return ; namely, that his mother may no longer be in pain for his safety : this likewise excellently contributes to deceive *Eumeus*. Now as the presence of *Ulysses* in the Palace is absolutely necessary to bring about the Suitors destruction, *Telemachus* orders *Eumeus* to conduct him thither, and by this method he comes as the friend and guest of *Eumeus*, not of *Telemachus* : moreover, this injunction was necessary : *Eumeus* was a person of such generosity, that he would have thought himself obliged to detain his guest under his own care and inspection : nay, before he guides him towards the palace, in the sequel of this book, he tells *Ulysses* he does it solely in compliance with the order of *Telemachus*, and acts contrary to his own inclinations.

§. 14. *To wipe the tears from all afflicted eyes,*  
*My will may covet, but my pow'r denies.]*



BOOK XVII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 115

If this raise anger in the stranger's thought,  
The pain of anger punishes the fault :  
The very truth I undisguis'd declare :  
For what so easy as to be sincere ?

To this *Ulysses*. What the Prince requires 20  
Of swift removal, seconds my desires.

To want like mine, the peopled town can yield  
More hopes of comfort, than the lonely field.  
Nor fits my age to till the labour'd lands,  
Or stoop to tasks a rural Lord demands. 25

Adieu ! but since this ragged garb can bear  
So ill, th' inclemencies of morning air,  
A few hours space permit me here to stay ; }  
My steps *Eumeus* shall to town convey, }  
With riper beams when *Phœbus* warms the day. }

This might appear too free a declaration, if *Telemachus* had made it before he knew *Ulysses*; for no circumstance could justify him for using any disregard toward the poor and stranger, according to the strict notions, and the sanctity of the laws of hospitality amongst the antients: but as the case stands, we are not in the least shocked at the words of *Telemachus*; we know the reason why he thus speaks; it is to conceal *Ulysses*. He is so far from shewing any particular regard to him, that he treats him with a severity in some degree contrary to the laws of hospitality; by adding, that if he complains of this hard usage, the complaint will not redress but increase his calamity.



## 116. HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xvii.

Thus he : nor ought *Telemachus* reply'd, 31  
But left the mansion with a lofty stride :  
Schemes of revenge his pond'ring breast elate,  
Revolving deep the Suitors sudden fate.  
  
Arriving now before th' Imperial hall ; 35  
He props his spear against the pillar'd wall ;  
Then like a Lion o'er the threshold bounds ;  
The marble pavement with his step resounds ;  
His eye first glanc'd where *Euryklea* spreads  
With fury spoils of beasts the splendid beds : 40  
She saw, she wept, she ran with eager pace,  
And reach'd her master with a long embrace.  
All crowded round, the family appears  
With wild entrancement, and exstatick tears.  
Swift from above descends the royal Fair ; 45 }  
(Her beauteous cheeks the blush of *Venus* wear,  
Chasten'd with coy *Diana*'s pensive air) }

\*. 46. *Her beauteous cheeks the blush of Venus wear,*  
*Chasten'd with coy Diana's pensive air.]*

This description presents us with a noble idea of the beauty and chastity of *Penelope*; her person resembles *Venus*, but *Venus with the modest air of Diana*. *Dionysius Halicarn.* takes notice of the beauty and softness of these two verses.

"Η δ' οὐκ ἐν Θαλάμοιο περίφεων Πυνελόπειχ  
Αρτέμιδο οἰκέλη, η δὲ χρυσῆ Ἀφροδίτη.



## BOOK XVII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 117

Hangs o'er her son ; in his embraces dies ;  
Rains kisses on his neck, his face, his eyes :  
Few words she spoke, tho' much she had to say,  
And scarce those few, for tears, could force their  
way.

51

Light of my eyes ! he comes ! unhop'd-for  
joy !

Has heav'n from *Pylos* brought my lovely boy ?

When *Homer* (remarks that Author) paints a beautiful face, or an engaging object, he chuses the softest vowels, and most smooth and flowing semivowels : he never clogs the pronunciation with rough sounds, and a collision of untunable consonants, but every syllable, every letter conspires to exhibit the beauty of the object he endeavours to represent : there are no less than three and thirty vowels in two lines, and no more than twenty-nine consonants, which makes the verses flow away with an agreeable smoothness and harmony.

*Penelope*, we see, embraces her son with the utmost affection : *kissing the lip* was not in fashion in the days of *Homer* ; *No one* (remarks the Bishop) ever *kisses the lip or mouth*. *Penelope* here kisses her son's eyes, and his head ; that is, his cheek, or perhaps forehead ; and *Eumeus*, in the preceding book, embraces the hands, eyes, and head of *Telemachus*. But for the comfort of the Ladies, I rejoice to observe that all these were ceremonious kisses from a mother to a son, or from an inferior to a superior : this therefore is no argument that lovers thus embraced, nor ought it to be brought as a reason why the present manner of salutation should be abrogated. Madam *Dacier* has been so tender as to keep it a secret from the men, that there ever was a time in which the modern method of kissing was not in fashion : she highly deserves their thanks and gratitude for it.



## 118 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xvii.

So snatch'd from all our cares!—Tell, hast thou known

Thy father's fate, and tell me all thy own. 55

Oh dearest, most rever'd of womankind!  
Cease with those tears to melt a manly mind,  
(Reply'd the Prince) nor be our fates deplor'd,  
From death and treason to thy arms restor'd.  
Go bathe, and rob'd in white, ascend the tow'rs;  
With all thy handmaids thank th' immortal  
Pow'rs; . . . . . 61

To ev'ry God vow hecatombs to bleed,  
And call Jove's vengeance on their guilty deed.  
While to th' assembled council I repair;  
A stranger sent by Heav'n attends me there; 65

\*. 65. *A stranger sent by Heav'n attends me there.*] There is a vein of sincere piety that runs through the words and actions of *Telemachus*: he has no sooner delivered his mother from her uneasy apprehensions concerning his safety, but he proceeds to another act of virtue toward *Theoclymenus*, whom he had taken into his protection: he performs his duty towards men and towards the Gods. It is by his direction that *Penelope* offers up her devotions for success, and thanks for his return. It is he who prescribes the manner of it; namely, by washing the hands, in token of the purity of mind required by those who supplicate the Deities; and by putting on clean garments, to shew the reverence and regard with which their souls ought to be possesst when they appear before the Gods. I am not sen-



## BOOK XVII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 119

My new accepted guest I haste to find,  
Now to *Piræus'* honour'd charge consign'd,  
The matron heard, nor was his word in vain.  
She bath'd ; and rob'd in white, with all her  
train,  
To every God vow'd hecatombs to bleed, 70  
And call'd *Jove's* vengeance on the guilty deed.  
Arm'd with his lance the Prince then past the  
gate ;  
Two dogs behind, a faithful guard await ;  
*Pallas* his form with grace divine improves :  
The gazing croud admires him as he moves : 75  
Him, gath'ring round, the haughty Suitors greet  
With semblance fair, but inward deep deceit.  
Their false addresses gen'rous he deny'd,  
Past on, and sat by faithful *Mentor's* side ;  
With *Antiphus*, and *Halitherses* sage, 80  
(His father's counsellours, rever'd for age.)

sible that the last ceremony is often mentioned in other parts of *Homer* ; yet I doubt not but it was practised upon all religious solemnities. The moral of the whole is, that piety is a sure way to victory : *Telemachus* appears every where a good man, and for this reason he becomes at last an happy one ; and his calamities contribute to his glory.



120 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xvii.

Of his own fortunes, and *Ulysses'* fame,  
Much ask'd the Seniors ; 'till *Piræus* came. .  
The stranger-guest pursu'd him close behind ;  
Whom when *Telemachus* beheld, he join'd. 85  
He, (when *Piræus* ask'd for slaves to bring  
The gifts and treasures of the *Spartan* King)  
Thus thoughtful answer'd : 'Those we shall not  
move,

Dark and unconscious of the will of *Jove* :  
We know not yet the full event of all : 90  
Stabb'd in his Palace if your Prince must fall,  
Us, and our house if treason must o'erthrow,  
Better a friend possess them, than a foe :  
If death to these, and vengeance heav'n decree,  
Riches are welcome then, not else, to me. 95  
'Till then, retain the gifts.—The Hero said,  
And in his hand the willing stranger led.  
Then dif-array'd, the shining bath they sought,  
(With unguents smooth) of polish'd marble  
wrought ;  
Obedient handmaids with assistant toil 100  
Supply the limpid wave, and fragrant oil :



BOOK XVII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 121

Then o'er their limbs refulgent robes they threw,  
And fresh from bathing to their seats withdrew.  
The golden ew'r a Nymph attendant brings,  
Replenish'd from the pure, translucent springs ;  
With copious streams that golden ew'r sup-  
plies

106

A silver laver of capacious size.

They wash : the table, in fair order spread,  
Is pil'd with viands and the strength of bread.

Full opposite, before the folding gate,

110

The pensive mother sits in humble state ;

Lowly she sat, and with dejected view

The fleecy threads her ivory fingers drew.

The Prince and stranger shar'd the genial feast,

Till now the rage of thirst and hunger ceast.

115

When thus the Queen. My son ! my only  
friend !

Say, to my mournful couch shall I ascend ?

¶. 117. *Say, to my mournful couch, &c.] Penelope had requested Telemachus to give her an account of his voyage to Pyle, and of what he had heard concerning Ulysses. He there waved the discourse, because the Queen was in publick with her female attendants : by this conduct the Poet sustains both their characters; Penelope is impatient to hear of Ulysses; and*



122 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xvii.

(The couch deserted now a length of years ;  
The couch for ever water'd with my tears) •  
Say wilt thou not (ere yet the Suitor-crew 120  
Return, and riot shakes our walls a-new)  
Say wilt thou not the least Account afford ?  
The least glad tidings of my absent Lord ?

To her the youth. We reach'd the *Pylian*  
plains,

Where *Nestor*, shepherd of his people, reigns. 125  
All arts of tenderness to him are known,  
Kind to *Ulysses*' race as to his own ;  
No father with a fonder grasp of joy,  
Strains to his bosom his long-absent boy.  
But all unknown, if yet *Ulysses* breathe, 130  
Or glide a spectre in the realms beneath ;

this agrees with the affection of a tender wife ; but the discovery being unseasonable, *Telemachus* forbears to satisfy her curiosity ; in which he acts like a wise man. Here (observes *Eustathius*) she gently reproaches him for not satisfying her impatience concerning her husband ; she insinuates that it is a piece of cruelty to permit her still to grieve, when it is in his power to give her comfort ; and this induces him to gratify her desires. It ought to be observed, that *Homer* chuses a proper time for this relation ; it was necessary that the Suitors should be ignorant of the story of *Ulysses* ; *Telemachus* therefore makes it when they are withdrawn to their sports, and when none were present but friends.



## BOOK XVII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 123

For further search, his rapid steeds transport  
My lengthen'd journey to the *Spartan* court.  
There *Argive Helen* I beheld, whose charms  
(So Heav'n decreed) engag'd the Great in arms.  
My cause of coming told, he thus rejoin'd ; 136  
And still his words live perfect in my mind.

Heav'ns ! would a soft, inglorious, daftard  
train

An absent Hero's nuptial joys profane !

\*. 134. *There Argive Helen I beheld, whose charms  
(So Heav'n decreed) &c.]*

*Eustathius* takes notice of the candid behaviour of *Telemachus*, with respect to *Helen*: she had received him courteously, and he testifies his gratitude, by ascribing the calamities she drew upon her country to the decree of heaven, not to her immodesty : this is particularly decent in the mouth of *Telemachus*, because he is now acquainted with his father's return ; otherwise he could not have mentioned her name but to her dishonour, who had been the occasion of his death.

\*. 138. *Heav'ns ! would a soft, inglorious, daftard train, &c.]*  
These verses are repeated from the fourth *Odyssey*; and are not without a good effect ; they cannot fail of comforting *Penelope*, by assuring her that *Ulysses* is alive, and restrained by *Calypso* involuntarily ; they give her hopes of his return, and the satisfaction of hearing his glory from the mouth of *Menelaus*. The conciseness of *Telemachus* is likewise remarkable ; he recapitulates in thirty-eight lines the subject of almost three books, the third, the fourth, and fifth ; he selects every circumstance that can please *Penelope*, and drops those that would give her pain,



124 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xvii.

So with her young, amid the woodland shades,  
A tim'rous hind the lion's court invades, • 141  
Leaves in that fatal lair her tender fawns,  
And climbs the cliff, or feeds along the lawns ;  
Meantime returning, with remorseless sway  
The Monarch savage rends the panting prey : 145  
With equal fury, and with equal fame,  
Shall great *Ulysses* re-affert his claim.

O Jove ! Supreme ! whom men and Gods revere ;  
And thou whose lustre gilds the rolling sphere !  
With pow'r congenial join'd, propitious aid 150  
The Chief adopted by the martial maid !  
Such to our wish the warriour soон restore,  
As when, contending on the *Lesbian* shore,  
His prowess *Philomelides* confess,  
And loud acclaiming *Greeks* the victor blest : 155  
Then soon th' invaders of his bed, and throne,  
Their love presumptuous shall by death atone.  
Now what you question of my antient friend,  
With truth I answer ; thou the truth attend.  
Learn what I heard the \* sea-born Seer relate,  
Whose eye can pierce the dark recess of fate. 161

\* *Proteus*.



## BOOK XVII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 125

Sole in an Isle, imprison'd by the main,  
The sad survivor of his num'rous train,  
*Ulysses* lies ; detain'd by magick charms,  
And prest unwilling in *Calypso's* arms. 165

No sailors there, no vessels to convey,  
Nor oars to cut th' immeasurable way—  
This told *Atrides*, and he told no more.  
Thence safe I voyag'd to my native shore.

He ceas'd ; nor made the pensive Queen re-  
ply, . . . . . 170

But droop'd her head, and drew a secret sigh.  
When *Theoclymenus* the seer began :  
Oh suff'ring consort of the suff'ring man !

\*. 172. *When Theoclymenus the seer began, &c.]* It is with great judgment that the Poet here introduces *Theoclymenus* ; he is a person that has no direct relation to the story of the *Odysssey*, yet because he appears accidentally in it, *Homer* unites him very artificially with it, that he may not appear to no purpose, and as an useless ornament. He here speaks as an *Augur*, and what he utters contributes to the perseverance of *Penelope* in resisting the addresses of the Suitors, by assuring her of the return of *Ulysses* ; and consequently in some degree *Theoclymenus* promotes the principal action. But it may be said, if it was necessary that *Penelope* should be informed of his return, why does not *Telemachus* assure her of it, who was fully acquainted with the truth ? The answer is, that *Penelope* is not to be fully informed, but only encouraged by a general hope : *Theoclymenus* speaks from his art, which may possibly be liable



126 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book XVII.

What human knowledge could, • those Kings  
might tell ;

But I the secrets of high Heav'n reveal. 175

Before the first of Gods be this declar'd,  
Before the board whose blessings we have  
shar'd ;

Witness the genial rites, and witness all  
This house holds sacred in her ample wall !

Ev'n now this instant, great *Ulysses* lay'd 180  
At rest, or wand'ring in his country's shade,  
Their guilty deeds, in hearing, and in view  
Secret revolves ; and plans the vengeance due.

Of this sure Auguries the Gods bestow'd,  
When first our vessel anchor'd in your road. 185

to errour ; but *Telemachus* must have spoken from knowledge, which would have been contrary to the injunctions of *Ulysses*, and might have proved fatal by an unseasonable discovery : it was therefore judicious in the Poet to put the assurance of the return of *Ulysses* into the mouth of *Theoclymenus*, and not of *Telemachus*.

There is an expression in this speech, which in the Greek is remarkable ; literally it is to be rendered, *Ulysses is now sitting or creeping in Ithaca*, ἦμενθη ἡ ἐγπων ; that is, *Ulysses* is returned and concealed : it is taken from the posture of a person in the act of endeavouring to hide himself : he sits down or creeps upon the ground. *Eustathius* explains it by κρίφα, κάτε κατ' ὅρθον, βαδίζων.



BOOK XVII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 127

Succeed those omens Heav'n! (the Queen re-join'd)

So shall our bounties speak a grateful mind ;  
And ev'ry envy'd happiness attend  
The man, who calls *Penelope* his friend.

Thus commun'd they : while in the marble court

190

(Scene of their insolence) the Lords resort ;  
Athwart the spacious square each tries his art  
To whirl the disk, or aim the missile dart.

Now did the hour of sweet repast arrive, 194  
And from the field the victim flocks they drive :  
*Medon* the herald (one who pleas'd them best,  
And honour'd with a portion of their feast)

\*. 192. — — — *each tries his art.*

*To whirl the disk, or aim the missile dart.]*

*Eustathius* remarks that though the Suitors were abandoned to luxury, vice, and intemperance, yet they exercise themselves in laudable sports : they toss the quoit, and throw the javelin, which are both heroick diversions, and form the body into strength and activity. This is owing to the virtue of the age, not the persons : such sports were fashionable, and therefore used by the Suitors, and not because they were heroick. However they may instruct us never to give ourselves up to idleness and inaction ; but to make our very diversions subservient to nobler views, and turn a pleasure into a virtue.

\*. 196. *Medon the herald, one who pleas'd them best.]* We may observe that the character of *Medon* is very particular ; he



128 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xvii.

To bid the banquet, interrupts their play.  
Swift to the hall they haste ; aside they lay.  
Their garments, and succinct, the victims slay.  
Then sheep and goats and bristly porkers  
bled,

201

And the proud steer was o'er the marble spread.

While thus the copious banquet they provide ;  
Along the road conversing side by side,  
Proceed *Ulysses* and the faithful swain :  
When thus *Eumeus*, gen'rous and humane.

To town, observant of our Lord's behest,  
Now let us speed ; my friend, no more my guest !

is at the same time a favourite of the Suitors, and *Telcmachus*, persons entirely opposite in their interest. It seldom happens any man can please two parties, without acting an insincere part : *Atticus* was indeed equally acceptable to the two factions of *Cæsar* and *Pompey*, but it was because he seemed neutral, and acted as if they were both his friends ; or rather he was a man of such eminent virtues, that they esteemed it an honour to have him thought their friend. *Homer* every where represents *Medon* as a person of integrity ; he is artful, but not criminal : no doubt but he made all compliances, that consisted with probity, with the Suitors dispositions ; by this method he saved *Penelope* more effectually than if he had shewed a more rigid virtue. He made himself master of their hearts by an insinuating behaviour, and was a spy upon their actions. *Eustathius* compares him to a buskin that fits both legs, *αἱων τις κοράξ* ; he seems to have been an *Anti-Cato*, and practised a virtuous gaiety.



## BOOK XVII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 129

Yet like myself I wish'd thee here preferr'd,

Guard of the flock, or keeper of the herd. 210

But much to raise my master's wrath I fear;

The wrath of Princes ever is severe.

Then heed his will, and be our journey made ]

While the broad beams of *Phœbus* are display'd, ]

Or ere brown ev'ning spreads her chilly shade. ]

Just thy advice, (the prudent Chief rejoin'd) 216

And such as suits the dictate of my mind.

¶. 210. *Guard of the flock, or keeper of the herd.*] Such little traits as these are very delightful; for the Reader knowing that the person to whom this offer is made, is *Ulysses*, cannot fail of being diverted to see the honest and loyal *Eumeus* promising to make his master and King the keeper of his herds or stalls, *ταθυῶν*; and this is offered as a piece of good fortune or dignity.

¶. 215. — — — *ere ev'ning spreads her chilly shade.*] *Eustathius* gathers from these words, that the time of the action of the *Odyssey* was in the end of autumn, or beginning of winter, when the mornings and evenings are cold: thus *Ulysses*, in the beginning of this book, makes the coldness of the morning an excuse for not going with *Telemachus*; his rags being but an ill defence against it: and here *Eumeus* mentions the coldness of the evening, as a reason why they should begin their journey in the heat of the day; so that it was now probably about ten of the clock, and they arrive at *Ithaca* at noon: from hence we may conjecture, that the lodge of *Eumeus* was five or six miles from the city: that is, about a two hours walk.



## 130 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book XVII.

Lead on : but help me to some staff to stay  
My feeble step, since rugged is the way.

Across his shoulders, then the scrip he flung, 220  
Wide patch'd, and fasten'd by a twisted thong.

A staff *Eumeus* gave. Along the way  
Cheerly they fare : behind, the keepers stay ;  
These with their watchful dogs (a constant guard)  
Supply his absence, and attend the herd. 225  
And now his city strikes the Monarch's eyes,  
Alas ! how chang'd ! a man of miseries ;

¶. 224. *These with their watchful dogs — —*] It is certain that if these little particulars had been omitted, there would have been no chasm in the connexion ; why then does Homer insert such circumstances unnecessarily, which it must be allowed are of no importance, and add nothing to the perfection of the story ? nay, they are such as may be thought trivial, and unworthy the dignity of Epick Poetry. But, as Dacier very well observes, they are a kind of painting : were a painter to draw this subject, he would undoubtedly insert into the piece these herdsmen and dogs after the manner of Homer ; they are natural ornaments, and consequently are no disgrace either to the Poet or the Painter.

It is observable that Homer gives us an exact draught of the country ; he sets before us as in a picture, the city, the circular grove of poplars adjacent, the fountain falling from a rock, and the Altar sacred to the Nymphs, erected on the point of it. We are as it were transported into Ithaca, and travel with Ulysses and Eumeus : Homer verifies the observation of Horace above all Poets ; namely, that Poetry is Painting.



BOOK XVII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 131

Propt on a staff, a beggar old and bare,  
In rags dishonest flutt'ring with the air !  
Now pass'd the rugged road, they journey down  
The cavern'd way descending to the town, 231  
Where, from the rock, with liquid lapse distills  
A limpid fount ; that spread in parting rills  
Its current thence to serve the city brings :  
An useful work ! adorn'd by antient Kings. 235

*Neritus, Ithacus, Polyctor* there  
In sculptur'd stone immortaliz'd their care,  
In marble urns receiv'd it from above,  
And shaded with a green surrounding grove ;  
Where silver alders, in high arches twin'd, 240  
Drink the cold stream, and tremble to the wind.  
Beneath, sequester'd to the Nymphs, is seen  
A mossy altar, deep embower'd in green ;

\*. 236. *Neritus, Ithacus, Polyctor* — — ] Publick benefactions demand publick honours and acknowledgments ; for this reason *Homer* makes an honourable mention of these three brothers. *Ithaca* was a small Island, and destitute of plenty of fresh water ; this fountain therefore was a publick good to the whole region about it ; and has given immortality to the Authors of it. They were the sons of *Pterclaus* (as *Eustathius* informs us) ; *Ithacus* gave name to the country, *Neritus* to a mountain, and *Polyctor* to a place called *Polyctorium*.



132 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xvii.

Where constant vows by travellers are paid,  
And holy horrors solemnize the shade.      245

Here with his goats, (not vow'd to sacred flame,  
But pamper'd luxury) *Melanthius* came ;  
Two grooms attend him. With an envious look  
He ey'd the stranger, and imperious spoke.

The good old proverb how this pair fulfil !  
One rogue is usher to another still.      251

Heav'n with a secret principle indu'd  
Mankind, to seek their own similitude.  
Where goes the swine-herd with that ill-look'd  
guest ?

That giant-glutton, dreadful at a feast !      255  
Full many a post have those broad shoulders  
worn,

From ev'ry great man's gate repuls'd with scorn ;  
To no brave prize aspir'd the worthless swain,  
'Twas but for scraps he ask'd, and ask'd in vain.

¶. 258. *To no brave prize aspir'd the worthless swain,  
'Twas but for scraps he ask'd, and ask'd in vain.]*

*Dacier* is very singular in her interpretation of this passage : she imagines it has a reference to the games practised amongst the Suitors, and to the rewards of the victors, which were usually Tripods and beautiful captives. “ Thinkest thou (says



## BOOK XVII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 133

To beg, than work, he better understands ; 260  
Or we perhaps might take him off thy hands.

“ *Melanthis*) that this beggar will obtain the victory in our sports, and that they will give him as the reward of his valour, some beautiful slave, or some precious Tripod?” But in *Homer* there is nothing that gives the least countenance to this explication : he thus literally speaks : this fellow *by going from door to door will meet with correction, while he begs meanly for a few scraps, not for things of price, such as a captive or Tripod.* *Eustathius* explains it as spoken in contempt of *Ulysses* ; that he appears to be such a vile person, as to have no ambition or hope to expect any thing better than a few scraps, nor to aspire to the rewards of nobler strangers, such as captives or Tripods. Ἀχολοι, says the same Author, are the minutest crumbs of bread, σμικρότατοι φαμι. I am persuaded, that the Reader will subscribe to the judgment of *Eustathius*, if he considers the construction, and that ἀορας and ξεντας are governed by αἰτίων as effectually as ἀχόλοις, and therefore must refer to the same act of begging, not of claiming by victory in the games ; αἰτίων is not a word that can here express a reward, but only a charity : besides, would it not be absurd to say that a Beggar goes from door to door asking alms, and not rewards bestowed upon victors in publick exercises ? The words πολλῆσι φλυῆσι make the sense general, they denote the life of a beggar, which is to go from door to door, and consequently they ought not to be confined solely to the Suitors, and if not, they can have no reference to any games, or to any rewards bestowed upon such occasions. Besides, it is scarce to be conceived that *Melanthis* could think this beggar capable of being admitted into the company, much less into the diversion of the Suitors, who were all persons of high birth and Station. It is true, lib. xxi. *Ulysses* is permitted to try the bow, but this is through the peculiar grace of *Telermachus*, who knew the Beggar to be *Ulysses* ; and entirely contrary to their injunctions.



134 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xvii.

For any office could the slave be good,  
To cleanse the fold, or help the kids to food;  
If any labour those big joints could learn ; 264  
Some whey, to wash his bowels, he might earn.  
To cringe, to whine, his idle hands to spread,  
Is all, by which that graceless maw is fed.  
Yet hear me ! if thy impudence but dare  
Approach yon' walls, I prophecy thy fare :  
Dearly, full dearly shalt thou buy thy bread 270  
With many a footstool thund'ring at thy head.

He thus : nor insolent of word alone,  
Spurn'd with his rustick heel his King unknown ;  
Spurn'd, but not mov'd : he, like a pillar stood,  
Nor stirr'd an inch, contemptuous, from the  
road : 275

Doubtful, or with his staff to strike him dead,  
Or greet the pavement with his worthless head.

From this passage we may correct an error in *Hesychius* :  
ἀρετές (says he) are γυναικεῖς καὶ τείποδες : the sentence is evidently  
maimed, for *Hesychius* undoubtedly thus wrote it, ἀρετές γυναικεῖς  
τείποδες, for thus (adds he) *Homer* uses it :

— — — ἦν ἀρετές θόδος λεωντας.

That is (says *Hesychius*) εἰ γυναικεῖς ἦδι τείποδες, referring to this  
verse of the *Odyssey*.



## BOOK XVII. HOMER's ODYSSEY. 135

Short was that doubt ; to quell his rage inur'd,  
The Hero stood self-conquer'd, and dur'd.  
But hateful of the wretch, *Eumeus* heav'd 280  
His hands obtesting, and this pray'r conceiv'd.  
Daughters of *Jove* ! who from th' ætherial  
bow'rs  
Descend to swell the springs, and feed the flow'rs !  
Nymphs of this fountain ! to whose sacred names  
Our rural victims mount in blazing flames ! 285

¶. 279. *The Hero stood self-conquer'd, and dur'd.*] Homer excellently sustains the character of *Ulysses* ; he is a man of patience, and master of all his passions ; he is here misused by one of his own servants, yet is so far from returning the injury, that he stifles the sense of it, without speaking one word : it is true he is described as having a conflict in his Soul ; but this is no derogation to his character : not to feel like a man is Insensibility, not virtue ; but to repress the emotions of the heart, and keep them within the bounds of moderation, this argues wisdom, and turns an injury into a virtue and glory. There is an excellent contrast between the benevolent *Eumeus* and the insolent *Melanthius*. *Eumeus* resents the Outrage of *Melanthius* more than *Ulysses* ; he is moved with indignation, but how does he express it ? not by railing, but by an appeal to Heaven in a prayer : a conduct worthy to be imitated in more enlightened ages. The word *αὐλαῖς* here bears a peculiar signification ; it does not imply Voluptuousness as usually, but Pride, and means that *Ulysses* would spoil his haughty airs, if he should ever return : this interpretation agrees with what follows, where *Eumeus* reproaches him for despising his rural charge, and aspiring to politeness, or, as we express it, to be a Man of the Town.



136 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xvii.

To whom *Ulysses'* piety preferr'd  
The yearly firstlings of his flock, and herd ; •  
Succeed my wish ; your votary restore :  
Oh be some God his convoy to our shore !  
Due pains shall punish then this slave's offence,  
And humble all his airs of insolence,                  291  
Who proudly stalking, leaves the herds at large,  
Commences courtier, and neglects his charge.

What mutters he ? (*Melanthis* sharp rejoins)  
This crafty miscreant big with dark designs ? 295  
The day shall come ; nay, 'tis already near,  
When slave ! to sell thee at a price too dear,  
Must be my care ; and hence transport thee o'er,  
(A load and scandal to this happy shore.)  
Oh ! that as surely great *Apollo's* dart,                  300  
Or some brave Suitor's sword, might pierce the  
heart

Of the proud son ; as that we stand this hour  
In lasting safety from the father's pow'r.

So spoke the wretch ; but shunning farther fray,  
Turn'd his proud step, and left them on their  
way.



## BOOK XVII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 137

Straight to the feastful palace he repair'd,  
Familiar enter'd, and the banquet shar'd ;  
Beneath *Eurymachus*, his patron lord,  
He took his place, and Plenty heap'd the board.

Meantime they heard, soft-circling in the sky,  
Sweet Airs ascend, and heav'nly minstrelsie ; 311  
(For *Pbemius* to the Lyre attun'd the strain :)  
*Ulysses* hearken'd, then address't the swain.

Well may this Palace admiration claim,  
Great, and respondent to the master's fame ! 315  
Stage above stage th' imperial structure stands,  
Holds the chief honours and the town commands:  
High walls and battlements the courts inclose,  
And the strong gates defy a host of foes.

¶. 308. *Beneath Eurymachus —— He took his place, —— }*  
We may gather from hence the truth of an observation formerly made, That *Melanthius*, *Eumæus*, &c. were persons of distinction, and their offices posts of honour: we see *Melanthius*, who had charge of the Goats of *Ulysses*, is a companion for Princes.

The reason why *Melanthius* in particular associates himself with *Eurymachus* is, an intrigue which that Prince holds with *Melanthro* his sister, as appears from the following Book. There is a confederacy and league between them, and we find they all suffer condign punishment in the end of the *Odyssey*.

¶. 318. *High walls and battlements, &c.*] We have here a very particular draught or plan of the palace of *Ulysses*; it is



## 138 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xvii.

Far other cares its dwellers now employ : 320  
The throng'd assembly, and the feast of joy :  
I see the smokes of sacrifice aspire,  
And hear (what graces ev'ry feast) the Lyre.

Then thus *Eumeus*. Judge we which were  
best ;

Amidst yon' revellers a sudden guest 325  
Chuse you to mingle, while behind I stay ?  
Or I first ent'ring introduce the way ?  
Wait for a space without, but wait not long ;  
This is the house of violence and wrong :  
Some rude insult thy rev'rend age may bear ; 330  
For like their lawless lords, the servants are.

Just is, oh friend ! thy caution, and address  
(Reply'd the Chief) to no unheedful breast ;

a kind of castle, at once designed for strength and magnificence : this we may gather from *ἰπερπλίσσωτο*, which *Hesychius* explains by *ἰπερπλήσαι*, *ἰπερβῆναι*, not easily to be surmounted, or forced by arms.

*Homer* artfully introduces *Ulysses* struck with wonder at the beauty of the palace ; this is done to confirm *Eumeus* in the opinion that *Ulysses* is really the Beggar he appears to be, and a perfect stranger among the *Ithacans* : thus also when he complains of hunger, he speaks the language of a Beggar, as *Eustathius* remarks, to persuade *Eumeus* that he takes his journey to the Court, solely out of want and hunger.



BOOK XVII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 139

The wrongs and injuries of base mankind  
Fresh to my sense, and always in my mind. 335  
The bravely-patient to no fortune yields ;  
On rolling oceans, and in fighting fields,  
Storms have I past, and many a stern debate ;  
And now in humbler scene submit to Fate,  
What cannot *Want*? the best she will expose, 340  
And I am learn'd in all her train of woes ;  
She fills with nayies, hosts, and loud alarms  
The sea, the land, and shakes the world with  
arms !

Thus, near the gates conferring as they drew,  
*Argus*, the Dog his antient master knew ; 345

». 345. *Argus, the Dog his antient master knew, &c.]* This whole Episode has fallen under the ridicule of the Criticks ; Monsieur *Perault's* in particular : “ The Dunghill before the Palace (says that Author) is more proper for a Peasant than a King ; and it is beneath the dignity of Poetry to describe the Dog *Argus* almost devoured with vermin.” It must be allowed, that such a familiar Episode could not have been properly introduced into the *Iliad* : it is writ in a nobler style, and distinguished by a boldness of sentiments and diction ; whereas the *Odyssey* descends to the Familiar, and is calculated more for common than heroick life. What *Homer* says of *Argus* is very natural, and I do not know any thing more beautiful or more affecting in the whole Poem : I dare appeal to every person's judgment, if *Argus* be not as justly and properly represented, as the noblest figure in it. It is certain that the ver-



## 140 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xvii.

He, not unconscious of the voice, and tread,  
Lifts to the sound his ear, and rears his head ;  
Bred by *Ulysses*, nourished at his board,  
But ah ! not fated long to please his Lord !  
To him, his swiftness and his strength were vain ;  
The voice of Glory call'd him o'er the main. 351

'Till then in ev'ry silvan chace renown'd,  
With *Argus*, *Argus*, rung the woods around ;  
With him the youth pursu'd the goat or fawn,  
Or trac'd the mazy leveret o'er the lawn. 355

Now left to man's ingratitude he lay,  
Unhous'd, neglected in the publick way ;

min which *Homer* mentions would debase our Poetry, but in the *Greek* that very word is noble and sonorous, Κυριακέων : but how is the objection concerning the Dunghill to be answered ? We must have recourse to the simplicity of manners amongst the Antients, who thought nothing mean that was of use to life. *Ithaca* was a barren Country, full of Rocks and Mountains, and owed its fertility chiefly to cultivation, and for this reason such circumstantial cares were necessary. It is true such a description now is more proper for a Peasant than a King, but antiently it was no disgrace for a King to perform with his own hands, what is now left only to Peasants. We read of a Dictator taken from the plough, and why may not a King as well manure his field as plough it, without receding from his dignity ? *Virgil* has put the same thing into a Precept :

“ Ne saturare fimo pingui pudeat sola.”



BOOK XVII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 141

And where on heaps the rich manure was spread,  
Obscene with Reptiles, took his sordid bed.

He knew his Lord; he knew, and strove to  
meet ; 360

In vain he strove, to crawl, and kiss his feet;  
Yet (all he could) his tail, his ears, his eyes  
Salute his master, and confess his joys.

Soft pity touch'd the mighty master's soul;  
Adown his cheek a tear unbidden stole, 365

\*. 361. *In vain he strove, to crawl, and kiss his feet.*] It may seem that this circumstance was inserted casually, or at least only to shew the age and infirmity of *Argus*: but there is a further intent in it: if the Dog had ran to *Ulysses* and fawned upon him, it would have raised a strong suspicion in *Eumeus* that he was not such a stranger to the *Ithacans* as he pretended, but some person in disguise; and this might have occasioned an unseasonable discovery. *Eustathius*.

\*. 364. *Soft pity touch'd the mighty master's soul.*] I confess myself touched with the tenderness of these tears in *Ulysses*; I would willingly think that they proceed from a better principle than the weakness of human nature, and are an instance of a really virtuous, and compassionate disposition.

— — — αγαθοὶ δὲ ἀγιδάρχες ἄρδες.

*Good men are easily moved to Tears:* in my judgment *Ulysses* appears more amiable while he weeps over his faithful Dog, than when he drives an army of enemies before him: That shews him to be a great Hero, This a good Man. It was undoubtedly an instance of an excellent disposition in one of the Fathers who prayed for the *Grace of Tears*.



142 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xvii.

Stole unperceiv'd ; he turn'd his head and dry'd  
The drop humane : then thus impassion'd cry'd.

What noble beast in this abandon'd state  
Lies here all helpless at *Ulysses*' gate ?  
His bulk and beauty speak no vulgar praise ; 370  
If, as he seems, he *was* in better days,  
Some care his Age deserves : or was he priz'd  
For worthless beauty ! therefore now despis'd ?  
Such dogs, and men there are, meer things of  
state,

374

And always cherish'd by their friends, the Great.

— — — — “ *mollissima corda*  
“ *Humano generi dare se natura fatetur,*  
“ *Quæ lachrymas dedit ; hæc nostri pars optima sensus.* ”  
*Juv. Sat. xv.*

And *Dryden*,

Each gentle mind the soft infection felt,  
For richest metals are most apt to melt.

¶. 374. *Such dogs, and men there are, meer things of state,*  
*And always cherish'd by their friends, the Great.]*

It is in the Greek ἄνακτος, or *Kings* ; but the word is not to be taken in too strict a sense ; it implies *all persons of distinction*, or οἰκεδισπότας, like the word *Rex* in *Horace*.

“ *Regibus hic mos est ubi equos mercantur.* ”

And *Reginæ* in *Terence* (as *Dacier* observes) is used in the same manner.

— — “ *Funuchum porrò dixti velle te :*  
“ *Quia sœlæ utuntur his reginæ.* ”



Not *Argus* so, (*Eumæus* thus rejoin'd)  
But serv'd a master of a nobler kind,  
Who never, ncver shall behold him more !  
Long, long since perish'd on a distant shore !  
Oh had you seen him, vig'rous, bold and young,  
Swift as a stag, and as a lion strong ; 381  
Him no fell Savage on the plain withstood,  
None 'scap'd him, bosom'd in the gloomy wood ;  
His eye how piercing, and his scent how true,  
To winde the vapour in the tainted dew ! 385  
Such, when *Ulysses* left his natal coast ;  
Now years un-nerve him, and his lord is lost !  
The women keep the gen'rous creature bare,  
A sleek and idle race is all their care :  
The master gone, the servants what restrains ?  
Or dwells Humanity where riot reigns ? 391  
*Jove* fix'd it certain, that whatever day  
Makes man a slave, takes half his worth away.

\*. 392. — — — — *Whatever day*  
*Makes man a slave, takes half his worth away.]*

This is a very remarkable sentence, and commonly found to be true. *Longinus* in his enquiry into the decay of human wit, quotes it. “ Servitude, be it never so justly established, is a “ kind of prison, wherein the soul shrinks in some measure,



This said, the honest herdsman strode before :  
The musing Monarch pauses at the door : • 395  
The Dog whom Fate had granted to behold.  
His Lord, when twenty tedious years had roll'd,  
Takes a last look, and having seen him, dies ;  
So clos'd for ever faithful *Argus*' eyes !

" and diminishes by constraint : it has the same effect with  
" the boxes in which dwarfs are inclosed, which not only  
" hinder the body from its growth, but make it less by the  
" constriction. It is observable that all the great Orators  
" flourished in Republicks, and indeed what is there that  
" raises the souls of great men more than Liberty ? In other  
" governments men commonly become instead of Orators,  
" pompous flatterers : a man born in servitude may be ca-  
" pable of other sciences ; but no slave can ever be an Or-  
" tor ; for while the mind is deprest and broken by slavery,  
" it will never dare to think or say any thing bold and noble ;  
" all the vigour evaporates, and it remains as it were confined  
" in a prison." *Etiam fera animalia, si clausa tencas, virtutis  
obliviscuntur.* Tacit. Hist. lib. iv.

These verses are quoted in *Plato*, lib. vi. *de legibus*, but somewhat differently from our editions.

" Εμισυ γάρ τε νός ἀπομείφεται εὑρίσκει τοιούτα ζεῦς,  
" Αὐδῆν δέ, οὐδὲ δὴ, &c.

However this aphorism is to be understood only generally, not universally : *Eumeus* who utters it is an instance to the contrary, who retains his virtue in a state of subjection ; and *Plato* speaks to the same purpose, asserting that some slaves have been found of such virtue as to be preferred to a son or brother ; and have often preserved their masters and their families.

¶. 399. *So clos'd for ever faithful Argus' eyes !*] It has been a question what occasioned the death of *Argus*, at the instant



BOOK XVII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 145

And now *Telemachus*, the first of all, 400  
Observe'd *Eumeus* ent'ring in the hall ;  
Distant he saw, across the shady Dome ;  
Then gave a sign, and beckon'd him to come :  
There stood an empty seat, where late was plac'd  
In order due, the steward of the feast, 405  
(Who now was busied carving round the board)  
*Eumeus* took, and plac'd it near his Lord.  
Before him instant was the banquet spread,  
And the bright basket pil'd with loaves of bread.

Next came *Ulysses*, lowly at the door, 410  
A figure despicable, old, and poor,  
In squalid vests with many a gaping rent,  
Propt on a staff, and trembling as he went.

he saw *Ulysses* : *Eustathius* imputes it to the joy he felt at the sight of his master. But there has another objection been started against *Homer*, for ascribing so long a life as twenty years to *Argus*, and that dogs never surpass the fifteenth year ; but this is an error ; *Aristotle* affirms, that some dogs live two and twenty, and other Naturalists subscribe to his judgment. *Eustathius* tells us, that other writers agree, that some dogs live twenty-four years. *Pliny* thus writes, *Canes Laconici vivunt annis-denis, fœminæ duodenis, cæteræ genera quindecim annos, aliquando viginti*. Madam *Dacier* mentions some of her own knowledge that lived twenty-three years ; and the Translator, not to fall short of these illustrious examples, has known one that died at twenty-two big with puppies.



146 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book xvii.

Then, resting on the threshold of the gate,  
Against a cypress pillar lean'd his weight ; \*415  
(Smooth'd by the workman to a polish'd plain)  
The thoughtful son beheld, and call'd his swain :

These viands, and this bread, *Eumæus!* bear,  
And let yon' mendicant our plenty share :  
Then let him circle round the Suitors board, 420  
And try the bounty of each gracious lord.  
Bold let him ask, encourag'd thus by me ;  
How ill, alas ! do want and shame agree ?

\*. 423. *How ill, alas ! do want and shame agree ?*] We are not to imagine that *Homer* is here recommending immodesty ; but to understand him as speaking of a decent assurance, in opposition to a faulty shame or bashfulness. The verse in the *Greek* is remarkable.

Ἄττως δέ οὐκ ἀγαθὴ μεχρημένῳ ἀρδεὶ προσέειν.

A person of great learning has observed that there is a tautology in the three last words ; in *a beggar that wants* : as if the very notion of a beggar did not imply want. Indeed *Plato*, who cites this verse in his *Charmides*, uses another word instead of *προσέειν*, and inserts *προσίται*. *Hesiod* likewise, who makes use of the same line, instead of *προσέειν* reads *κομίζει*, which would almost induce us to believe that they thought there was a tautology in *Homer*. It has therefore been conjectured, that the word *προσέειν* should be inserted in the place of *προσίται* ; I am sorry that the construction will not allow it ; that word is of the masculine gender, and *ἀγαθὴ* which is of the feminine cannot agree with it. We may indeed substitute *ἀγαθὸς*, and then the sense will be *bashfulness is no good petitioner for a beg-*



## BOOK XVII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 147

His lord's command the faithful servant bears ;  
The seeming beggar answers with his pray'rs.  
Blest be *Telemachus* ! in ev'ry deed                          426  
Inspire him *Jove* ! in ev'ry wish succeed !  
This said, the portion from his son convey'd  
With similes receiving on his scrip he lay'd. 429  
Long as the minstrel swept the sounding wire,  
He fed, and ceas'd when silence held the lyre.  
Soon as the Suitors from the banquet rose,  
*Minerva* prompts the Man of mighty woes

*gar* ; but this must be done without authority. We must therefore thus understand *Homer* ; “ Too much modesty is not good for a poor man, who lives by begging,” *ασεβήν* ; and this solution clears the verse from the tautology, for a man may be in want, and not be a beggar ; or (as *Homer* expresses it) *απέργηντος*, and yet not *αργίντης*.

\* 433. *Minerva prompts, &c.*] This is a circumstance that occurs almost in every book of the *Odyssey*, and *Pallas* has been thought to mean no more than the inherent wisdom of *Ulysses*, which guides all his actions upon all emergencies : it is not impossible but the Poet might intend to inculcate, that the wisdom of man is the gift of Heaven, and a blessing from the Gods. But then is it not a derogation to *Ulysses*, to think nothing but what the Goddess dictates ? and a restraint of human liberty, to act solely by the impulse of a Deity ? *Fiatarch* in his life of *Coriolanus* excellently solves this difficulty ; “ Men (observes that Author) are ready to censure and despise the Poet, as if he destroyed the use of reason, and the freedom of their choice, by continually ascribing every suggestion of heart to the influence of a Goddess : whereas he in-



## 148 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book xvii.

To tempt their bounties with a suppliant's art,  
And learn the gen'rous from th' ignoble heart;

" introduces a Deity not to take away the liberty of the will, " but as moving it to act with freedom ; the Deity does not " work in us the inclinations, but only offers the object to " our minds, from whence we conceive the impulse, and " form our resolutions." However these influences do not make the action involuntary, but only give a beginning to spontaneous operations ; for we must either remove God from all manner of causality, or confess that he invisibly assists us by a secret co-operation. For it is absurd to imagine that the help he lends us, consists in fashioning the postures of the body, or directing the corporeal motions : but in influencing our souls, and exciting the inward faculties into action by secret impulses from above ; or, on the contrary, by raising an aversion in the soul, to restrain us from action. It is true in ordinary affairs of life, in matters that are brought about by the ordinary way of reason, *Homer* ascribes the execution of them to human performance, and frequently represents his Heroes calling a council in their own breasts, and acting according to the dictates of reason : but in actions unaccountably daring, of a transcendent nature, there they are said to be carried away by a divine impulse or enthusiasm, and it is no longer human reason, but a God that influences the soul.

I have already observed, that *Homer* makes use of Machines sometimes merely for ornament ; this place is an instance of it : here is no action of an uncommon nature performed, and yet *Pallas* directs *Ulysses* : *Plutarch* very justly observes, that whenever the Heroes of *Homer* execute any prodigious exploit of valour, he continually introduces a Deity, who assists in the performance of it ; but it is also true, that to shew the dependance of man upon the assistance of Heaven, he frequently ascribes the common dictates of wisdom to the Goddess of it. If we take the act here inspired by *Minerva*, as it lies nakedly in *Homer*, it is no more than a bare command to beg ; an act, that needs not the wisdom of a Goddess to



## BOOK XVII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 149

(Not but his soul, resentful as humane, 436  
Dooms to full vengeance all th' offending train)  
With speaking eyes, and voice of plaintiff sound,  
Humble he moves, imploring all around.

command : but we are to understand it as a direction to *Ulysses* how to behave before the Suitors upon his first appearance, how to carry on his disguise so artfully as to prevent all suspicions, and take his measures so effectually as to work his own re-establishment : in this light, the command becomes worthy of a Goddess : the act of begging is only the method by which he carries on his design ; the consequence of it is the main point in view, namely, the Suitors destruction. The rest is only the stratagem, by which he obtains the victory.

¶. 435. *And learn the gen'rous from th' ignoble heart :*

*(Not but his soul, resentful as humane,  
Dooms to full vengeance all th' offending train).]*

A single virtue, or act of humanity, is not a sufficient atonement for a whole life of insolence and oppression ; so that although some of the Suitors should be found less guilty than the rest, yet they are still too guilty to deserve impunity.

¶. 438. *With speaking eyes, and voice of plaintive sound,  
Humble he moves, &c.]*

*Homer* inserts this particularity to shew the complying nature of *Ulysses* in all fortunes ; he is every where ~~πολύτερος~~, it is his distinguishing character in the first verse of the *Odyssy*, and it is visible in every part of it. He is an artist in the trade of begging, as *Eustathius* observes, and knows how to become the lowest, as well the highest station.

*Homer* adds, that the Suitors were struck with wonder at the sight of *Ulysses*. That is (says *Eustathius*) because they never had before seen him in *Ithaca*, and concluded him to be a foreigner. But I rather think it is a compliment *Homer* pays to his Hero to represent his port and figure to be such, as though a beggar, struck them with astonishment.



150 HOMER's ODYSSEY. BOOK XVII.

The proud feel pity, and relief bestow, 440  
With such an image touch'd of human woe;  
Enquiring all, their wonder they confess,  
And eye the man, majestick in distress.

While thus they gaze and question with their  
eyes,

The bold *Melanthius* to their thought replies. 445  
My Lords! this stranger of gigantick port  
The good *Eumeus* usher'd to your court.  
Full well I mark'd the features of his face,  
Tho' all unknown his clime, or noble race.

And is this present, swineherd! of thy  
hand? 450

Bring'st thou these vagrants to infest the land?  
(Returns *Antinous* with retorted eye)

Objects uncouth! to check the genial joy.  
Enough of these our court already grace,  
Of giant stomach, and of famish'd face. 455  
Such guests *Eumeus* to his country brings,  
To share our feast, and lead the life of Kings.

To whom the hospitable swain rejoind:  
Thy passion, Prince, belies thy knowing mind.



BOOK XVII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 151

Who calls, from distant nations to his own, 460  
The poor, distinguish'd by their wants alone?  
Round the wide world are sought those men  
divine

Who publick structures raise, or who design;  
Those to whose eyes the Gods their ways reveal,  
Or bless with salutary arts to heal; 465

But chief to Poets such respect belongs,  
By rival nations courted for their songs;  
These States invite and mighty Kings admire,  
Wide as the sun displays his vital fire.

It is not so with Want! how few that feed 470  
A wretch unhappy, merely for his need?  
Unjust to me and all that serve the state,  
To love *Ulysses* is to raise thy hate.

[§. 462. *Round the wide world are sought those men divine, &c.*] This is an evidence of the great honour antiently paid to persons eminent in mechanick arts: the architect, and publick artisans, *δημιουργοι*, are joined with the Prophet, Physician, and Poet, who were esteemed almost with a religious veneration, and looked upon as publick blessings. Honour was antiently given to men in proportion to the benefits they brought to society: a useless great man is a burthen to the earth, while the meanest artisan is beneficial to his fellow-creatures, and useful in his generation.



152 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xvii.

For me, suffice the approbation won  
Of my great mistress, and her God-like son: 475

To him *Telemachus*. No more incense  
The man by nature prone to insolence :  
Injurious minds just answers but provoke —  
Then turning to *Antinous*, thus he spoke.  
Thanks to thy care ! whose absolute command  
Thus drives the stranger from our court and  
land. 481

Heav'n bless its owner with a better mind !  
From envy free, to charity inclin'd.  
This both *Penelope* and I afford :  
Then, Prince ! be bounteous of *Ulysses'* board.  
To give another's is thy hand so slow ? 486  
So much more sweet, to spoil, than to bestow ?

Whence, great *Telemachus* ! this lofty strain ?  
(*Antinous* cries with insolent disdain)  
Portions like mine if ev'ry suitor gave, 490  
Our walls this twelvemonth should not see the  
slave.

He spoke, and lifting high above the board  
His pond'rous footstool, shook it at his lord.



## BOOK XVII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 153

The rest with equal hand conferr'd the bread ; }  
He fill'd his scrip, and to the threshold sped ; }  
But first before *Antinous* stopt, and said. 496 }  
Bestow my friend ! thou dost not seem the worst  
Of all the *Greeks*, but Prince-like and the first ;  
Then as in dignity, be first in worth,  
And I shall praise thee thro' the boundless earth.  
Once I enjoy'd in luxury of state 501  
Whate'er gives man the envy'd name of Great ;

¶ 497. *Bestow my friend ! &c.*] *Ulysses* here acts with a prudent dissimulation ; he pretends not to have understood the irony of *Antinous*, nor to have observed his preparation to strike him : and therefore proceeds as if he apprehended no danger. This at once shews the patience of *Ulysses*, who is inured to sufferings, and gives a foundation for the punishment of *Antinous* in the conclusion of the *Odyssy*.

It is observable, that *Ulysses* gives his own History in the same words as in the fourteenth book, yet varies from it in the conclusion ; he there spoke to *Eumeus*, and *Eumeus* is here present, and hears the story : how is it then that he does not observe the falsification of *Ulysses*, and conclude him to be an impostor ? *Euphathius* labours for an answer ; he imagines that *Eumeus* was inadvertent, or had forgot the former relation, and yet asserts that the reason why *Ulysses* tells the same History in part to *Antinous*, proceeds from a fear of detection in *Eumeus*. I would rather imagine that *Ulysses* makes the deviation, trusting to the judgment of *Eumeus*, who might conclude that there was some good reason why he forbears to let *Antinous* into the full History of his life ; especially, because he was an enemy both to *Ulysses* and *Eumeus* : he might therefore easily reflect, that the difference of his story arose from prudence and design, rather than from imposture and falsehood.



154 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xvii.

Wealth, servants, friends, were mine in better days ;

And hospitality was then my praise ;  
In ev'ry sorrowing soul I pour'd delight, 505

And poverty stood smiling in my sight.

But *Jove*, all-governing, whose only will  
Determines Fate, and mingles good with ill,  
Sent me (to punish my pursuit of gain)  
With roving pirates o'er th' *Ægyptian* main : 510  
By *Ægypt*'s silver flood our ships we moor ;  
Our spies commission'd straight the coast ex-  
plore ;

But impotent of mind, with lawless will  
The country ravage, and the natives kill.

The spreading clamour to their city flies, 515  
And horse and foot in mingled tumult rise :  
The red'ning dawn reveals the hostile fields  
Horrid with bristly spears, and gleaming shields :  
*Jove* thunder'd on their side : our guilty head  
We turn'd to flight ; the gath'ring vengeance  
spread 520 }  
On all parts round, and heaps on heaps lay dead. }



## BOOK XVII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 155

Some few the foes in servitude detain ;  
Death ill exchang'd for bondage and for pain !  
Unhappy me a *Cyprian* took a-board,  
And gave to *Dmetor*, *Cyprus'* haughty Lord : 525  
Hither, to 'scape his chains, my course I steer  
Still curst by fortune, and insulted here !

To whom *Antinous* thus his rage exprest.  
What God has plagu'd us with this gormand  
guest ?

Unless at distance, wretch ! thou keep behind, ]  
Another Isle, than *Cyprus* more unkind ; 531 }  
Another *Ægypt*, shalt thou quickly find. }

¶. 525. *And gave to Dmetor, Cyprus' haughty Lord.*] We are not to search too exactly into historick truth among the fictions of Poetry ; but it is very probable that this *Dmetor* was really King of *Cyprus*. *Eustathius* is of this opinion ; but it may be objected, that *Cinyras* was King of *Cyprus* in the time of *Ulysses*. Thus *lib. xi. Iliad.*

The beaming Cuirass next adorn'd his breast ;  
The same which once King *Cinyras* possest ;  
The fame of *Greece*, and her assembled host,  
Had reach'd that Monarch on the *Cyprian* coast.

The answer is, there were almost twenty years elapsed since the mention of this breast-plate of *Cinyras*; this King therefore being dead, *Dmetor* possest the *Cyprian* throne.

¶. 532. *Another Ægypt, &c.*] This passage is a full demonstration that the country was called *Ægypt* in the days of *Homer*, as well as the river *Nilus*; for in the speech he uses



156 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xvii.

From all thou beg'st, a bold audacious slave ;  
Nor all can give so much as thou canst crave.  
Nor wonder I, at such profusion shown ; 535  
Shameless they give, who give what's not their  
own.

The Chief, retiring. Souls like that in thee,  
Ill suit such forms of grace and dignity.  
Nor will that hand to utmost need afford  
The smallest portion of a wasteful board, 540  
Whose luxury whole patrimonies sweeps,  
Yet itarving Want, amidst the riot, weeps.

The haughty Suitor with resentment burns,  
And sow'rly smiling, this reply returns.  
Take that, ere yet thou quit this princely  
throng : 545

And dumb for ever be thy fland'rous tongue ! }  
He said, and high the whirling tripod flung. }  
His shoulder-blade receiv'd th' ungentle shock ;  
He stood, and mov'd not, like a marble rock ;

Aἰγαῖος in the masculine gender to denote the river, and here he calls it πατέρα Αἴγαυπτον in the feminine, to shew that he speaks of the country : the former word agreeing with πόταμος, the latter with γαῖα



BOOK XVII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 157

But shook his thoughtful head, nor more complain'd,

550

Sedate of soul, his character sustain'd,

And inly form'd revenge: then back withdrew;

Before his feet the well-fill'd scrip he threw,

And thus with semblance mild address't the crew.

May what I speak your princely minds approve,

555

Ye Peers and rivals in this noble love !

Not for the hurt I grieve, but for the cause.

If, when the fword our country's quarrel draws,

*¶. 557. Not for the hurt I grieve, but for the cause.]* The reasoning of *Ulysses* in the original is not without some obscurity: for how can it be affirmed, that it is no great affliction to have our property invaded, and to be wounded in the defence of it? The beggar who suffers for asking an alms, has no injury done him, except the violence offered to his person; but it is a double injury, to suffer both in our persons and properties. We must therefore suppose that *Ulysses* means, that the importance of the cause, when our rights are invaded, is equal to the danger, and that we ought to suffer wounds, or even death, in defence of it; and that a brave man grieves not at such laudable adventures. Or perhaps *Ulysses* speaks only with respect to *Antinous*, and means that it is a greater injury to offer violence to the poor and the stranger, than to persons of greater fortunes and station.

*Eustathius* gives a deeper meaning to the speech of *Ulysses*; he applies it to his present condition, and it is the same as if he had said openly; It would be no great matter if I had been wounded in defence of my Palace, and other properties, but to



158 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xvii.

Or if defending what is justly dear,  
From *Mars* impartial some broad wound we  
bear ;

560

The gen'rous motive dignifies the scar.

But for mere want, how hard to suffer wrong?

Want brings enough of other ills along !

Yet if injustice never be secure,

If fiends revenge, and Gods assert the poor, 565

Death shall lay low the proud aggressor's head,

And make the dust *Antinous'* bridal bed.

Peace wretch ! and eat thy bread without  
offence,

(The Suitor cry'd) or force shall drag thee hence,  
Scourge thro' the publick street, and cast thee  
there,

570

A mangled carcase for the hounds to tear.

His furious deed the gen'ral anger mov'd,  
All, ev'n the worst, condemn'd : and some re-  
prov'd.

suffer only for asking an alms, this is a deep affliction. So that *Ulysses* speaks in general, but intends his own particular condition ; and the import of the whole is, I grieve to suffer, not upon any weighty account, but only for being poor and hungry.



## BOOK XVII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 159

Was ever chief for wars like these renown'd?  
Ill fits the stranger and the poor to wound. 575  
Unblest thy hand! if in this low disguise  
Wander, perhaps, some inmate of the skies;  
They (curious oft' of mortal actions) deign  
In forms like these, to round the earth and main,  
Just and unjust recording in their mind, 580  
And with sure eyes inspecting all mankind.

*Telemachus* absorpt in thought severe,  
Nourish'd deep anguish, tho' he shed no tear;

¶. 578. *They (curious oft' of human actions) &c.]* We have already observed, that it was the opinion of the ancients, that the Gods frequently assumed an human shape. Thus *Ovid* of *Jupiter*.

— — — — “Summo delabor Olympo,  
“Et Deus humanâ lustro sub imagine terras.”

I refer the Reader to the objections of *Plato*, mentioned in the preceding book. It is observable, that *Homer* puts this remarkable truth into the mouth of the Suitors, to shew that it was certain and undeniable, when it is attested even by such persons as had no piety or religion.

¶. 582. *Telemachus* — —

*Nourish'd deep anguish, tho' he shed no tear.]*

This is spoken with particular judgment; *Telemachus* is here to act the part of a wise man, not of a tender son; he restrains his tears lest they should betray his father, it being improbable that he should weep for a vagabond and beggar. We find he has profited by the instructions of *Ulysses*, and practises the injunctions given in the former book.



## 160 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xvii.

But the dark brow of silent sorrow shook :  
While thus his mother to her virgins spoke. 585  
“ On him and his may the bright God of day  
“ That base, inhospitable blow repay ! ”  
The nurse replies : “ If Jove receives my pray'r,  
“ Not one survives to breathe to-morrow's air.”

All, all are foes, and mischief is their end ; 590  
*Antinous* most to gloomy death a friend ;  
(Replies the Queen) the stranger begg'd their  
grace,

And melting pity soften'd ev'ry face ;  
From ev'ry other hand redress he found,  
But fell *Antinous* answer'd with a wound. 595

Amidst her maids thus spoke the prudent Queen,  
Then bad *Eumæus* call the Pilgrim in.

Much of th' experienc'd man I long to hear,  
If or his certain eye, or list'ning ear

— — If scorn insult my reverend age,  
Bear it, my son ; repress thy rising rage.  
If outrag'd, cease that outrage to repel,  
Bear it my son, tho' thy brave heart rebel.

*Telemachus* struggles against the yearnings of nature, and shews himself to be a master of his passions ; he must therefore be thought to exert an act of wisdom, not of insensibility.



BOOK XVII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 161

Have learn'd the fortunes of my wand'ring  
Lord ? 600

Thus she, and good *Eumeus* took the word.

A private audience if thy grace impart,  
The stranger's words may ease the royal heart.  
His sacred eloquence in balm distils,  
And the sooth'd heart with secret pleasure fills. 605  
Three days have spent their beams, three nights  
have run

Their silent journey, since his tale begun,  
Unfinish'd yet; and yet I thirst to hear!  
As when some heav'n-taught Poet charms the ear,  
(Suspending sorrow with celestial strain 610  
Breath'd from the Gods to soften human pain)  
Time steals away with unregarded wing,  
And the soul hears him, tho' he cease to sing.

Ulysses late he saw, on *Cretan* ground,  
(His father's guest) for *Minos'* birth renown'd. 615

\*. 615. — — for *Minos'* birth renown'd.] *Diodorus Siculus* thus writes of *Minos*: “ He was the son of *Jupiter* and *Europa*, who was fabled to be carried by a bull, (that is, in a ship called the bull, or that had the image of a bull carved upon its prow) into *Crete*: here *Minos* reigned, and



## 162 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book xvii.

He now but waits the wind, to waft him o'er  
With boundless treasure, from *Thesprotia*'s shore.

To this the Queen. The wand'rer let me hear,  
While you luxurious race indulge their cheer,  
Devour the grazing ox and browzing goat, 620  
And turn my gen'rous vintage down their throat.  
For where's an arm, like thine *Ulysses*! strong,  
To curb wild riot and to punish wrong?

She spoke. *Telemachus* then sneez'd aloud ;  
Constrain'd, his nostril echo'd thro' the crowd. 625

" built many Cities : he established many laws among the  
" Cretans ; he also provided a navy, by which he subdued  
" many of the adjacent Islands. The expression in the Greek  
" will bear a twofold sense ; and implies either, where *Minos*  
" was born, or where the descendants of *Minos* reign ; for  
" *Idomenæus*, who governed Crete in the days of *Ulysses*, was  
" a descendant of *Minos*, from his son *Deucalion*.

*Homer* mentions it as an honour to *Crete*, to have given  
Birth to so great a law-giver as *Minos* ; and it is universally  
true, that every great man is an honour to his country :  
*Athens* did not give reputation to learned men, but learned  
men to *Athens*.

y. 624. —— *Telemachus then sneez'd aloud.*] *Eustathius*  
fully explains the nature of this omen ; for sneezing was  
reckoned ominous both by the *Greeks* and *Romans*. While  
*Penelope* uttered these words, *Telemachus* sneezes ; *Penelope*  
accepts the omen, and expects the words to be verified. The  
original of the veneration paid to sneezing is this : The head  
is the most sacred part of the body, the seat of thought and  
reason : now the sneeze coming from the head, the Antients



## BOOK XVII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 163

The smiling Queen the happy omen blest:

" So may these impious fall, by fate opprest!"

looked upon it as a sign or omen, and believed it to be sent by *Jupiter*; therefore they regarded it with a kind of adoration: the Reader will have a full idea of the nature of the omen of sneezing here mentioned, from a singular instance in lib. iii. of *Xenophon*, in his expedition of *Cyprus*. *Xenophon* having ended a short speech to his soldiers with these words, *viz.* " We have many reasons to hope for preservation;" they were scarce uttered, when a certain soldier sneezed: the whole army took the omen, and at once paid adoration to the Gods; then *Xenophon* resuming his discourse, proceeded, " Since, my fellow-soldiers, at the mention of our preservation, *Jupiter* has sent this omen," &c. So that *Xenophon* fully explains *Homer*.

Sneezing was likewise reckoned ominous by the *Romans*. Thus *Catullus*,

" Hoc ut dixit, Amor sinistra ut ante  
" Dextram sternuit approbationem."

Thus also *Propertius*,

" Num tibi nascenti primis, mea vita, diebus  
" Aridus argutum sternuit omen amor.

We find in all these instances that sneezing was constantly received as a good omen, or a sign of approbation from the Gods. In these ages we pay an idle superstition to sneezing, but it is ever looked upon as a bad omen, and we cry *God bless you*, upon hearing it, as the *Greeks* in later times said ζῆδι, or Ζεῦ σῶσον. We are told this custom arose from a mortal distemper that affected the head, and threw the patient into convulsive sneezings, that occasioned his death.

I will only add from *Eustathius*, that *Homer* expresses the loudness of the sneezing, to give a reason why *Penelope* heard it, she being in an apartment at some distance from *Telemachus*.



164 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xvii.

Then to *Eumæus*: bring the stranger, fly !  
And if my questions meet a true reply,  
Grac'd with a decent robe he shall retire, 630  
A gift in season which his wants require.

Thus spoke *Penelope*. *Eumæus* flies  
In duteoue haste, and to *Ulysses* cries.  
The Queen invites thee, venerable guest !  
A secret instinct moves her troubled breast, 635  
Of her long absent Lord from thee to gain  
Some light, and foothe her soul's eternal  
pain.

If true, if faithful thou ; her grateful mind  
Of decent robes a present has design'd :  
So finding favour in the royal eye, 640  
Thy other wants her subjects shall supply.

Fair truth alone (the patient man reply'd)  
My words shall dictate, and my lips shall  
guide.

The sneezing likewise gives us the reason why *Penelope* immediately commands *Eumæus* to introduce the beggar into her presence: the omen gave her hopes to hear of *Ulysses*; she saw the beggar was a stranger, and a traveller, and therefore expected he might be able to give her some information.



BOOK XVII. HOMER's ODYSSEY. 165

To him, to me, one common lot was giv'n,  
In equal woes, alas! involv'd by heav'n. 645

Much of his fates I know; but check'd by fear  
I stand: the hand of violence is here:  
Here boundless wrongs the starry skies invade,  
And injur'd suppliants seek in vain for aid.

Let for a space the pensive Queen attend, 650  
Nor claim my story till the sun descend;  
Then in such robes as suppliants may require,  
Compos'd and chearful by the genial fire,  
When loud uproar and lawless riot cease,  
Shall her pleas'd ear receive my words in peace. 655

Swift to the Queen returns the gentle swain:  
And say, (she cries) does fear, or shame, detain  
The cautious stranger? With the begging kind  
Shame suits but ill. *Eumeus* thus rejoin'd:

¶, 644. *To him, to me, one common lot was giv'n,*  
*In equal woes, alas! involv'd by heav'n.]*

These words bear a double sense; one applicable to the speaker, the other to the Reader: the Reader, who knows this beggar to be *Ulysses*, is pleased with the concealed meaning, and hears with pleasure the beggar affirming that he is fully instructed in the misfortunes of *Ulysses*: but speaking in the character of a beggar, he keeps *Eumeus* in ignorance, who believes he is reciting the adventures of a friend, while he really gives his own History.



## 166 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xvii.

He only asks a more propitious hour, 660  
And shuns (who wou'd not?) wicked men in  
pow'r;

At ev'ning mild (meet season to confer)  
By turns to question, and by turns to hear.

Whoe'er this guest (the prudent Queen replies)  
His ev'ry step and ev'ry thought is wise. 665  
For men, like these, on earth he shall not find  
In all the miscreant race of human kind.

Thus she. *Eumæus* all her words attends,  
And parting, to the Suitor pow'rs descends :  
There seeks *Telemachus*, and thus apart 670  
In whispers breathes the fondness of his heart.

The time, my Lord, invites me to repair  
Hence to the lodge ; my charge demands my care.  
These sons of murder thirst thy life to take ;  
O guard it, guard it, for thy servant's sake ! 675

Thanks to my friend, he cries ; but now the hour  
Of night draws on, go seek the rural bow'r :

\*. 676. —— *but now the hour of night draws on* —— ] The Reader may look back to the beginning of the preceding book, for the explication of δένλος ἡμέρη, here mentioned by Homer.



BOOK XVII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 167

But first refresh : and at the dawn of day  
Hither a victim to the Gods convey.

Our life to heav'n's immortal pow'rs we trust, 68c  
Safe in their care, for heav'n protects the just.

Observant of his voice, *Eumæus* sat  
And fed recumbent on a chair of state.

Then instant rose, and as he mov'd along

"Twas riot all amid the Suitor-throng, 685  
They feast, they dance, and raise the mirthful  
song.

"Till now declining tow'rds the close of day,  
The sun obliquely shot his dewy ray.

This book does not fully comprehend the space of one day : it begins with the morning, and ends before night, so that the time here mentioned by the Poet, is the evening of the thirty-ninth day.



T H E  
E I G H T E E N T H . B O O K  
O F T H E  
O D Y S S E Y.

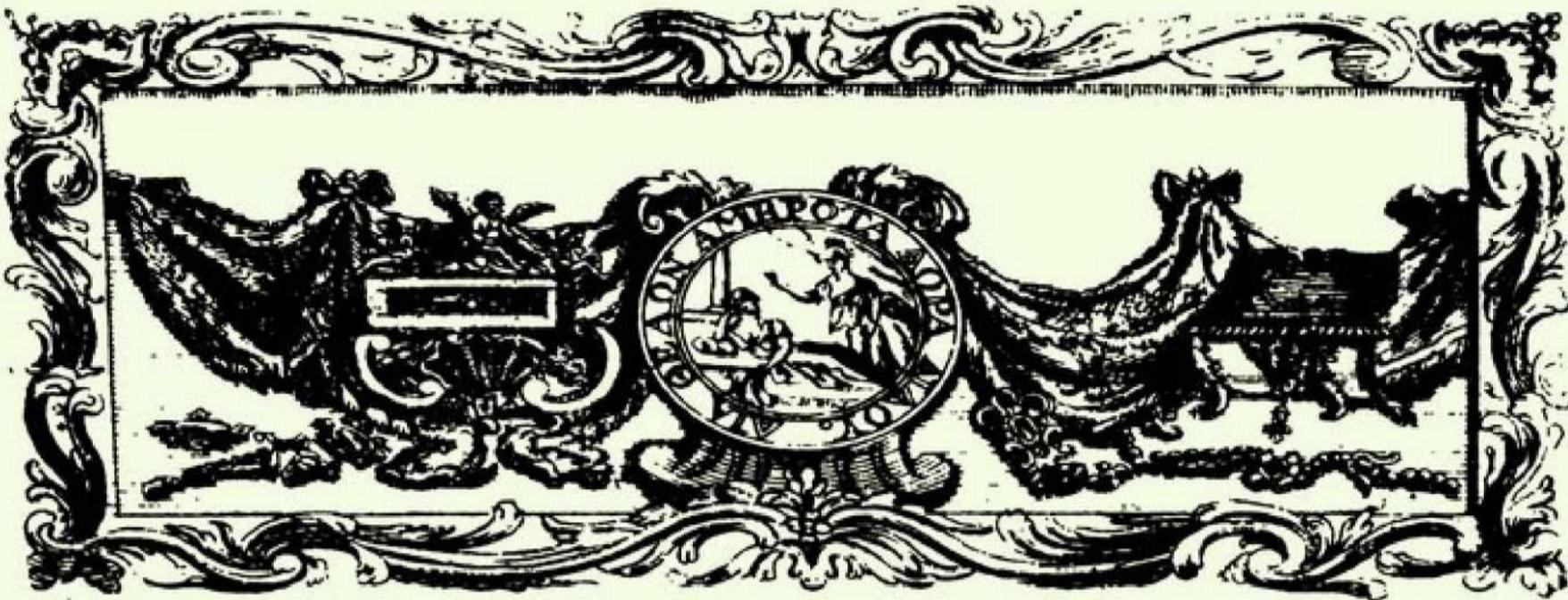




## The A R G U M E N T.

*The Fight of Ulysses and Irus.*

**T**HE Beggar Irus insults Ulysses; the Suitors promote the Quarrel, in which Irus is worsted, and miserably handled. Penelope descends, and receives the Presents of the Suitors. The Dialogue of Ulysses with Eurymachus.



THE  
\* EIGHTEENTH BOOK  
OF THE  
O D Y S S E Y.

WHILE fix'd in thought the pensive Hero  
sat,

A Mendicant approach'd the royal gate ;  
A surly vagrant of the giant kind,  
The stain of manhood, of a coward mind :

\* *Homer* has been severely blamed for describing *Ulysses*, a King, entering the lists with a beggar : *Rapin* affirms, that he demeans himself by engaging with an unequal adversary. The objection would be unanswerable, if *Ulysses* appeared in his royal character : but it is as necessary in Epick Poetry, as on the Theatre, to adapt the behaviour of every person to the character he is to represent, whether real or imaginary. Would it not have been ridiculous to have represented him,



## 172 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xviii.

From feast to feast, infatiate to devour  
He flew, attendant on the genial hour. 5

Him on his mother's knees, when babe he lay,  
She nam'd *Arnaeus* on his natal day :

while he was disguised in the garb of a beggar, refusing the combat, because he knew himself to be a King ? and would not such a conduct have endangered a discovery ? Ought we not rather to look upon this Episode as an instance of the greatness of the calamities of *Ulysses*, who is reduced to such uncommon extremities as to be set upon a level with the meanest of wretches ?

¶. 8. *She nam'd Arnaeus* ——] It seems probable from this passage, that the mother gave the name to the child in the days of *Homer*; though perhaps not without the concurrence of the father: thus in the scriptures it is said of *Leah*, that *she bare a son and called his name Reuben*; and again, *she called his name Simeon*; and the same is frequently repeated both of *Leah* and *Rachel*. In the age of *Aristophanes*, the giving a name to the child seems to have been a divided prerogative between the father and mother: for in his *Nephælus* there is a dispute between *Strepfiades* and his wife, concerning the name of their son: the wife was of noble birth, and would therefore give him a noble name; the husband was a plain villager, and was rather for a name that denoted frugality: but the woman not waving the least branch of her prerogative, they compromised the affair, by giving the child a compounded name that implied both frugality and chivalry, derived from φειδω to spare, and ἵππος an horse; and the young Cavalier's name was *Phidippides*. *Eustathius* affirms, that anciently the mother named the child; and the Scholiast upon *Aristophanes* in *avib.* quotes a fragment from *Euripides* to this purpose from a play called *Ægeus*.

'Τὶ σὲ μάτερ ἐν δεκάτῃ τέκνον ὠνόμασε.

*What was the name given on the tenth day by the mother to thee, the child?* Dacier tells us, that the name of *Arnaeus* was pro-



## BOOK XVIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 173

But *Irus* his associates call'd the Boy,  
Practis'd, the common messenger to fly ;      10 }  
*Irus*, a name expressive of th' employ.      }

From his own roof, with meditated blows,  
He strove to drive the man of mighty woes.

Hence dotard, hence ! and timely speed thy way,  
Left dragg'd in vengeance thou repent thy stay ; 15  
See how with nods assent yon princely train !  
But honouring age, in mercy I refrain ;  
In peace away ! left, if persuasions fail,  
This arm with blows more eloquent prevail.

To whom, with stern regard : O insolence, 20  
Indecently to rail without offence !

phetic ὅπο τῶν ἀρνῶν, from the sheep the glutton w<sup>o</sup>uld devour when he came to manhood ; but this is mere fancy, and it is no reason, because he proved a glutton, that therefore the name foretold it : one might rather think the fondness of the mother toward her infant, suggested a very different view : she gave the name according to her wishes, and flattered herself that he would prove a very rich man, a man of many flocks and herds : and therefore she called him Ἀραιός : and this is the more probable, because all riches originally consisted in flocks and herds.

y. ii. *Irus a name expressive of th' employ.*] To understand this, we must have recourse to the derivation of the word *Irus* ; it comes from εἰρω, which signifies nuncio ; *Irus* was therefore so called, because he was a public messenger ; and *Iris* bears that name, as the messenger of the Gods ; Ἰρος, ἀπαγέλλω ; Ἰρη, Ἀγελος. *Hesychius.*



174 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xviii.

What bounty gives, without a rival share ;  
I ask, what harms not thee, to breathe this air :  
Alike on alms we both precarious live :  
And canst thou envy, when the great relieve ? 25  
Know from the bounteous heav'ns all riches  
flow,

And what man gives, the Gods by man bestow ;  
Proud as thou art, henceforth no more be proud,  
Lest I imprint my vengeance in thy blood ;  
Old as I am, should once my fury burn, 30  
How would'st thou fly, nor ev'n in thought re-  
turn ?

Mere woman-glutton ! (thus the churl re-  
ply'd)

A tongue so flippant, with a throat so wide !  
Why cease I, Gods ! to dash those teeth away,  
Like some vile boar's, that greedy of his prey 35

[*To dash those teeth away,  
Like some wild Boar's.]*

These words refer to a custom that prevailed in former ages ; it was allowed to strike out the teeth of any beast which the owner found in his grounds : *Eustathius* informs us, that this was a custom or law among the people of *Cyprus* ; but from what *Homer* here speaks, it seems to have been a general practice ; at least it was in use amongst the *Ithacans*.



## BOOK XVIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 175

Uproots the bearded corn ? rise, try the fight,  
Gird well thy loins, approach and feel my might :  
Sure of defeat, before the Peers engage ;  
Unequal fight ! when youth contends with age !

Thus in a wordy war their tongues display 40  
More fierce intents, preluding to the fray ;  
*Antinous* hears, and in a jovial vein,  
Thus with loud laughter to the Suitor-train.

This happy day in mirth, my friends employ,  
And lo ! the Gods conspire to crown our joy. 45

\*. 37. *Gird well thy loins.*] We may gather from hence the manner of the single combat ; the champions fought naked, and only made use of a cincture round the loins out of decency. *Homer* directly affirms it, when *Ulysses* prepares for the fight.

Then girding his strong loins, the King prepares  
To close in combat, and his body bares ;  
Broad spread his shoulders, and his nervous thighs  
By just degrees like well turn'd columns rise ;  
Ample his chest, his arms are round and long,  
And each strong joint *Minerva* knits more strong.

Thus *Diomed* in the *Iliad* girds his friend *Euryalus* when he engages *Epæus*.

Officious with the cincture girds him round.

The speeches here are short, and the periods remarkably concise, suitable to the nature of anger. The Reader may consult the Annotations on the xxth book, concerning the Goat's entrails mentioned here by *Antinous*.



176 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xviii.

See ready for the fight, and hand to hand,  
Yon surly mendicants contentious stand ;  
Why urge we not to blows ? Well pleas'd they  
spring  
Swift from their seats, and thick'ning form a  
ring. 49

To whom *Antinous*. Lo ! enrich'd with blood,  
A kid's well-fatted entrails (tasteful food)  
On glowing embers lie ; on him bestow  
The choicest portion who subdues his foe ;  
Grant him unrival'd in these walls to stay,  
The sole attendant on the genial day. 55

The Lords applaud : *Ulysses* then with art,  
And fears well-feign'd, disguis'd his dauntless  
heart :

Worn as I am with age, decay'd with woe ;  
Say, is it baseness, to decline the foe ?  
Hard conflict ! when calamity and age 60  
With vig'rous youth, unknown to cares, en-  
gage !

Yet fearful of disgrace, to try the day  
Imperious hunger bids, and I obey ;



## BOOK XVIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 177

But swear, impartial arbiters of right,  
Swear to stand neutral, while we cope in fight. 65

The Peers assent: when straight his sacred head  
*Telemachus* uprais'd, and sternly said.

Stranger, if prompted to chastise the wrong  
Of this bold insolent; confide, be strong!  
Th' injurious Greek that dares attempt a blow, 70  
That instant makes *Telemachus* his foe;  
And these my friends \* shall guard the sacred ties  
Of hospitality, for they are wise.

¶. 64. *But swear, impartial arbiters of right,  
Swear to stand neutral, while we cope in fight.]*

This is a very necessary precaution: *Ulysses* had reason to apprehend that the Suitors would interest themselves in the cause of *Irus*, who was their daily attendant, rather than in that of a perfect stranger. *Homer* takes care to point out the prudence of *Ulysses* upon every emergence: besides, he raises this fray between two beggars into some dignity, by requiring the sanction of an oath to regulate the laws of the combat. It is the same solemnity used in the *list* between *Paris* and *Menelaus*, and represents these combatants engaging with the formality of two Heroes.

¶. 72. *And these my friends shall guard the sacred ties  
Of hospitality, for they are wise.]*

When *Telemachus* speaks these words, he is to be supposed to turn to *Eurymachus* and *Antinous*, to whom he directs his discourse. It must be allowed that this is an artful piece of flattery in *Telemachus*, and he makes use of it to engage these two Princes, who were the chief of the Suitors, on his side.

\* *Antinous* and *Eurymachus*.



178 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xviii.

Then girding his strong loins, the King prepares

To close in combat, and his body bares ; 75  
Broad spread his shoulders, and his nervous thighs  
By just degrees, like well-turn'd columns, rise :  
Ample his chest, his arms are round and long,  
And each strong joint *Minerva* knits more strong,  
(Attendant on her chief :) the Suitor-crowd 80  
With wonder gaze, and gazing speak aloud ;

*Irus ! alas ! shall Irus be no more,*  
Black fate impends, and this th' avenging hour !  
Gods ! how his nerves a matchless strength pro-  
claim :

Swell o'er his well-strung limbs, and brace his  
frame ! 85

Then pale with fears, and sick'ning at the fight,  
They dragg'd th' unwilling *Irus* to the fight ;

\*. 82. *Irus, αἷς ! shall Irus be no more.*] This is literally translated : I confess I wish Homer had omitted these little collusions of words : he sports with Ἰρος αἴρος. It is a low conceit, alluding to the derivation of *Irus*, and means that he shall never more be a messenger. The translation, though it be verbal, yet is free from ambiguity, and the joke concealed in αἴρος ; this will be evident if we substitute another name in the place of *Irus* ; we may say *Achilles* shall be no longer *Achilles*, without descending from the gravity of Epick Poetry.



## BOOK XVIII. HOMER's ODYSSEY. 179

From his blank visage fled the coward blood,  
And his flesh trembled as aghast he stood :

O that such baseness should disgrace the light !  
O hide it, death, in everlasting night ! 91  
(Exclaims *Antinous*) can a vig'rous foe  
Meanly decline to combat age and woe ?  
But hear me, wretch ! if recreant in the fray,  
That huge bulk yield this ill-contested day ; 95  
Instant thou fail'st, to *Echetus* resign'd ;  
A tyrant, fiercest of the tyrant-kind,

\*. 90. *O ! that such baseness should disgrace the light !*  
*Oh ! hide it, death, &c.]*

*Eustathius* gives us an instance of the deep penetration of some Criticks, in their comments upon these words; they have found in them the Philosophy of *Pythagoras*, and the transmigration of Souls. The verse stands thus in *Homer*;

Nῦ, μὴ μέτ' εἴης βεγαῖν, μέτοις γένοιο :  
which they imagine is to be understood after this manner; *I wish thou hadst never been born ! and mayst thou never exist again, or have a second being ! To recite such an absurdity, is to refute it.* The verse when literally rendered bears this import; *I wish thou wert now dead, or hadst never been born ! an impression very natural to persons in anger, who seldom give themselves time to speak with profound allusions to Philosophy.*

\*. 95. *Instant thou fail'st, to Echetus resign'd ;*  
*A tyrant, fiercest of the tyrant-kind.]*

The tradition concerning *Echetus* stands thus: he was King of *Epirus*, the son of *Euchenor* and *Phlegon*; he had a daugh-



180 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xviii.

Who casts thy mangled ears and nose a prey  
To hungry dogs, and lops the man away.

While with indignant scorn he sternly spoke,  
In ev'ry joint the trembling *Irus* shook ;      101  
Now front to front each frowning champion  
stands,

And poises high in air his adverse hands.

The Chief yet doubts, or to the shades below  
To fell the Giant at one vengeful blow,      105  
Or save his life ; and soon his life to save  
The King resolves, for mercy sways the brave.

ter called *Metopè*, or as others affirm, *Amphissa*; she being corrupted by *Aechmodicus*, *Echetus* put out her eyes, and condemned her to grind pieces of iron made in the resemblance of corn; and told her she should recover her sight when she had ground the iron into flour. He invited *Aechmodicus* to an entertainment, and cut off the extremities from all parts of his body, and cast them to the dogs; at length being seized with madness, he fed upon his own flesh, and dyed. This History is confirmed, lib. iv. of *Apollonius*,

"Υρπίσης Ἐχετος γλύναι; οὐ χάλκεα κέτι; α  
Πλῆξε Συρατός εῖς, συνέπτει δὲ κάρφεται ὅτῳ,  
Οφραίην οὐ χαλκὸν ἀλετφεύσα κατιῆ.

I wonder how this last quotation escaped the diligence of *Eustathius*. *Dacier* affirms, that no mention is made of *Echetus* by any of the Greek Historians, and therefore she has recourse to another tradition, preserved by *Eustathius*, who tells us, that *Echetus* was contemporary with *Homer*, that the Poet had been ill used by him, and therefore took this revenge for his inhumanity.



BOOK XVIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 181

That instant *Irus* his huge arm extends,  
Full on the shoulder the rude weight descends ;  
The sage *Ulysses*, fearful to disclose                   110  
The Hero latent in the man of woes,  
Check'd half his might ; yet rising to the stroke,  
His jaw-bone dash'd ; the crashing jaw-bone  
broke :

Down drop'd he stupid from the stunning wound ;  
His feet extended, quiv'ring, beat the ground ; 115  
His mouth and nostrils spout a purple flood ;  
His teeth, all shatter'd, rush immix'd with blood.

The Peers transported, as outstretch'd he lies,  
With bursts of laughter rend the vaulted skies ;

Then dragg'd along, all bleeding from the  
wound,   120

His length of carcass trailing prints the ground ;  
Rais'd on his feet, again he recls, he falls,  
'Till propp'd, reclining on the palace walls ;  
Then to his hand a staff the victor gave, 124  
And thus with just reproach address'd the slave.

There terrible, affright the dogs, and reign.  
A dreaded tyrant o'er the bestial train !



182 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xviii.

But mercy to the poor and stranger show,  
Lest heav'n in vengeance send some mightier  
woe.

Scornful he spoke, and o'er his shoulder }  
flung } 130

The broad patch'd scrip; the scrip in tatters hung }  
Ill join'd, and knotted to a twisted thong. }

Then, turning short, disdain'd a further stay;  
But to the palace measur'd back the way.

There as he rested, gathering in a ring      135  
**The Peers** with similes address their unknown  
King:

Stranger, may Jove and all th' aereal pow'rs,  
With ev'ry blessing crown thy happy hours?  
Our freedom to thy prowess'd arm we owe  
From bold intrusion of thy coward foe;      140

y. 140. *From bold intrusion of thy coward foe.*] The word in the Greek is ἄνατος. Γάστερα ἄνατος is a voracious appetite, a stomach that nothing can satisfy: *Hesychius* thus explains it: ἄνατος δικυκλίς, τοτὲ οὐδὲ ικανός, οὐδὲ ἀπλήψωτος παρὰ τὴν ἄλσος. But there is undoubtedly an error in *Hesychius*; instead of ικανός we should read ιοχρός, that is meager, or a stomach that appears always unfilled. The general moral that we are to gather from the behaviour of *Ulysses* and *Irus*, is that insolence and boasting are signs of cowardice.



BOOK XVIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 183

Instant the flying sail the slave shall wing  
To *Echetus*, the monster of a King.

While pleas'd he hears, *Antinous* bears the food,

A kid's well fatted entrails, rich with blood :  
The bread from canisters of shining mold 145  
*Amphinomus*; and wines that laugh in gold :  
And oh ! (he mildly cries) may heav'n display  
A beam of glory o'er thy future day !  
Alas, the brave too oft is doom'd to bear  
The gripes of poverty, and stings of care. 150  
To whom with thought mature the King re-  
plies :

The tongue speaks wisely, when the soul is wise ;  
Such was thy father ! in imperial state,  
Great without vice, that oft attends the great :  
Nor from the fire art thou, the son, declin'd ;  
Then hear my words, and grave them in thy  
mind ! · 156

y. 156. *Then bear my words, and grave them in thy mind!*] There never was a finer lecture of Morality read in any of the schools of the Philosophers, than this which *Ulysses* delivers to *Amphinomus*; he ushers it in with great solemnity, and speaks to all mankind in the person of *Amphinomus*. It



## 184 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK XVIII.

Of all that breathes, or grov'ling creeps on earth,  
Most vain is Man ! calamitous by birth ;  
To-day with pow'r elate, in strength he blooms ;  
The haughty creature on that pow'r presumes : 160  
Anon from heav'n a sad reverse he feels ;  
Untaught to bear, 'gainst heav'n the wretch rebels.  
For man is changeful, as his blifs or woe ;  
Too high when prosp'rous, when distrest too low.

is quoted by a variety of Authors : *Pliny* in his Preface to his natural History, *lib. 7.* has wrote a dissertation on this sentence.

Of all that breathes, or grov'ling creeps on earth,  
Most vain is Man, &c.

*Aristotle* and *Maximus Tyrius* quote it ; and *Plutarch* twice refers to it. *Homer* considers Man both with respect to the errors of the mind, and the calamities incident to the body ; and upon a review of all mortal creatures, he attributes to man the unhappy superiority in miseries. But indeed *Homer* is so plain that he needs no interpretation, and any words but his own must disgrace him. Besides, this speech is beautiful in another view, and excellently sets forth the forgiving temper of *Ulysses* : he saw that all the sparks of virtue and humanity were not extinguished in *Amphinomus* ; he therefore warns him with great solemnity to forsake the Suitors ; he imprints conviction upon his mind, though ineffectually, and shews by it that when he falls by the hand of *Ulysses* in the succeeding parts of the *Odyssy*, his death is not a revenge but a punishment.

y. 163. *For man is changeful as his blifs or woe.*] Most of the interpreters have greatly misrepresented these words,

Toῖος γαρ νόος ἐτίχθονιων ἀνθεύπων  
Οἴον εἰπεὶ θημέει ἄγγος.



## BOOK XVIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 185

There was a day, when with the scornful Great  
I swell'd in pomp and arrogance of state; 166

Proud of the pow'r that to high birth belongs;  
And us'd that pow'r to justify my wrongs.

Then let not man be proud : but firm of mind,  
Bear the best humbly, and the worst resign'd ; 170  
Be dumb when heav'n afflicts ! unlike yon' train  
Of haughty spoilers, insolently vain ;  
Who make their Queen and all her wealth a prey :  
But Vengeance and *Ulysses* wing their way.

They thus translate it, *talis mens hominum, qualem deus suggerit*; or, “ Such is the mind of man, as Heav'n inspires :” but this is an error, for *αἷς* cannot refer to *μοῖς*, but to *ηὐαρεῖς*, and the sentence is thus to be rendered, *Talis mens hominum, qualem diem deus inducit*; that is, “ The mind of man changes with the complexion of the day, as heav'n sends happiness or misery ;” or as in the translation,

For man is changeful, as his bliss or woe ;  
Too high when prosp'rous, when distres'd too low.

The Reader will be convinced that the construction requires this sense. by joining the preposition with the verb, *ἐν* with *ἀγνοεῖς*, and rendering it, *οἷος ηὐαρεῖς ἐπάγνοεῖς*; nothing being more frequent than such a division of the preposition from the verb amongst the *Greeks*. It must be allowed, that *Homer* gives a very unhappy, yet too just a picture, of human nature : man is too apt to be proud and insolent in prosperity, and mean and abject in adversity ; and those men who are most overbearing in an happy state, are always most base and mean in the day of affliction.



## 186 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book xviii.

O may'st thou, favour'd by some guardian pow'r,  
Far, far be distant in that deathful hour ! ~176  
For sure I am, if stern *Ulysses* breathe,  
These lawless riots end in blood and death.

Then to the Gods the rosy juice he pours,  
And the drain'd goblet to the Chief restores. 180  
Stung to the soul, o'ercast with holy dread,  
He shook the graceful honours of his head ;  
His boding mind the future woe foretells :  
In vain ! by great *Telemachus* he falls,  
For *Pallas* seals his doom : all sad he turns 185  
To join the Peers ; resumes his throne, and  
mourns.

Meanwhile *Minerva* with instinctive fires  
Thy soul, *Penelope*, from heav'n inspires ;  
With flatt'ring hopes the Suitors to betray,  
And seem to meet, yet fly, the bridal day; 190

[§. 189. *With flatt'ring hopes the Suitors to betray.*] The Greek is very concise, and the expression uncommon, ὅπως μετάστησις Συμὸς μυντίζειν ; that is, *Penelope* thus acted that she might dilate the heart of the Suitors ; meaning (as *Eustathius* observes) that she might give them false hopes by appearing in their company ; for the heart shrinks, and is contracted by sorrow and despair, and is again dilated by hope or joy : this is I believe literally true, the spirits flow briskly when we are in joy,



## BOOK XVIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 187

Thy husband's wonder, and thy son's, to raise ;  
And crown the mother and the wife with praise.

and a new pulse is given to the blood, which necessarily must dilate the heart : on the contrary, when we are in sorrow the spirits are languid, and the blood moves less actively ; and therefore the heart shrinks and contracts, the blood wanting vigour to dilate and expand it.

¶. 191. *Thy husband's wonder, and thy son's, to raise.]* This is solely the act of *Minerva*, for *Penelope* is ignorant that she is to appear before her husband. This interview is excellently managed by *Homer*: *Ulysses* is to be convinced of his wife's fidelity ; to bring this about, he introduces her upon the publick stage, where her husband stands as a common unconcerned spectator, and hears her express her love for him in the warmest terms ; here is no room for art or design, because she is ignorant that she speaks before *Ulysses* ; and therefore her words must be supposed to proceed from the heart. This gives us a reason why *Homer* makes her dwell at large upon her passion for *Ulysses*, and paint it in the strongest colours, *viz.* to evidence her chastity, and urge *Ulysses* to hasten the destruction of the Suitors, by convincing him that she is able no longer to delude the marriage hour. But then it may be objected, if *Penelope*'s sole design was to give a false hope to the Suitors, does she not take a very wrong method, by speaking so very tenderly of *Ulysses*? is not this a more probable reason for despair, than hope ? It is true, it would have been so, if in the conclusion of her speech she had not artfully added,

But when my son grows man, the royal sway  
Resign, and happy be thy bridal day !

So that *Telemachus* being now grown up to maturity, the Suitors concluded that the nuptial hour was at hand. If then we consider the whole conduct of *Penelope* in this book, it must be allowed to be very refined and artful ; she observes a due regard towards *Ulysses*, by shewing she is not to be persuaded to marry ; and yet by the same words she gives the Suitors



188 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book xviii.

Then, while the streaming sorrow dims her eyes,  
Thus with a transient smile the matron cries,

*Eurynome!* to go where riot reigns 195

I feel an impulse, tho' my soul disdains ;  
To my lov'd son the snares of death to show,  
And in the traitor-friend unmashk the foe ;  
Who smooth of tongue, in purpose insincere,  
Hides fraud in smiles, while death is ambush'd  
there. 200

Go warn thy son, nor be the warning vain,  
(Reply'd the sagest of the royal train)  
But bath'd, anointed, and adorn'd descend ;  
Pow'rful of charms, bid ev'ry grace attend ;  
The tide of flowing tears a-while suppress ; 205  
Tears but indulge the sorrow, not repress.

hopes that the day is almost come when she intends to celebrate her nuptials ; she manages so dexterously, as to persuade without a promise ; and for this reason the words are put into the mouth of *Ulysses*, and it is *Ulysses* who gives the hopes, rather than *Penelope*.

\*. 193. *Then, while the streaming sorrow dims her eyes,  
Thus with a transient smile the matron cries.]*

Homer gives us a very beautiful and just image in these words. In the *Iliad* he used a similar expression concerning *Andromache*, δακρύσσειν γέλασσα ; a smile chastis'd with tears. Ἀχείον δ' οὐδέλασσα here bears the same import.



## BOOK XVIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 189

Some joy remains : to thee a son is giv'n,  
Such as in fondness parents ask of heav'n.

Ah me ! forbear, returns the Queen, forbear,  
Oh ! talk not, talk not of vain beauty's care ; 210  
No more I bathe, since he no longer sees  
Those charms, for whom alone I wish to please.  
The day that bore *Ulysses* from this coast,  
Blaſted the little bloom these cheeks could boast.  
But instant bid *Autonoë* descend, 215  
Instant *Hippodamè* our steps attend ;  
Ill suits it female virtue, to be seen  
Alone, indecent, in the walks of men.

Then while *Eurynomè* the mandate bears,  
From heav'n *Minerva* shoots with guardian cares ;

\*. 207. — — — *To thee a son is giv'n,*  
*Such as in fondness parents ask of heav'n.]*

I am not certain that this is the exact sense of Homer ; Dacier understands him very differently. *Eurynomè* (observes that Author) is not endeavouring to comfort *Penelope* because her son is now come to years of maturity ; her purpose is, to shew the necessity she has to have recourse to art, to assist her beauty : for (adds she) your son is grown a man ; meaning that a Lady who has a son twenty years old, must have lost her natural beauty, and has occasion to be obliged to art to give her an artificial one. This, I confess, is too true, but it seems a little too ludicrous for Epick Poetry ; I have followed a different sense, that gives us a far nobler image ; conformable to that verse of Horace.



190 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xviii

O'er all her senses, as the couch she prest, 221  
She pours a pleasing, deep, and death-like  
rest,

With ev'ry beauty ev'ry feature arms,  
Bids her cheeks glow, and lights up all her  
charms,

In her love-darting eyes awakes the fires, 225

(Immortal gifts! to kindle soft Desires)

From limb to limb an air majestick sheds,  
And the pure iv'ry o'er her bosom spreads.

Such *Venus* shines, when with'a measur'd bound  
She smoothly gliding swims th' harmonious  
round, 230

When with the graces in the dance she moves,  
And fires the gazing Gods with ardent loves.

“ Quid voveat dulcî nutricula majus alumno,  
“ Quam sapere, &c.”

This agrees with the tenour of *Euryklea's* speech, and is a foundation of great comfort to *Penelope*.

¶. 221. O'er all her senses, as the couch she prest,  
She pours a pleasing, deep, and death-like rest.]

This is an admirable stroke of art, to shew the determined resolution of *Penelope*, to forbear the endeavour of making her person agreeable in any eyes but those of *Ulysses*: a goddess is obliged to cast her into an involuntary repose, and to supply an adventitious grace while she sleeps.



## BOOK XVIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 181

Then to the skies her flight *Minerva* bends,  
And to the Queen the damsel-train descends :  
Wak'd at their steps, her flowing eyes unclose ;

235

The tear she wipes, and thus renews her woes.

Howe'er 'tis well ; that sleep a-while can free

With soft forgetfulness, a wretch like me ;  
Oh ! were it giv'n to yield this transient breath,  
Send, oh ! *Diana*, send the sleep of death ! 240

Why must I waste a tedious life in tears,  
Nor bury in the silent grave my cares ?

O my *Ulysses* ! ever honour'd name !

For thee I mourn, till death dissolves my frame.

\*. 233. *Then to the skies her flight Minerva bends.*] We see *Penelope* is a woman of so much wisdom, as to be the favourite of *Minerva*. She acts in every point with the highest discretion, and is inconsolable for her husband ; yet the Poet forbears to let her into the secret that *Ulysses* is returned : this is undoubtedly an intended satyr, and *Homer* means, that a woman in every point discreet, is still to be suspected of loquacity : this seems to have been the real sentiment of *Homer*, which he more fully declares in the eleventh *Odyssyey*.

When earnest to explore thy secret breast,  
Unfold some trifle, but conceal the rest ;  
For since of woman-kind so few are just,  
I think all are false, nor ev'n the faithful trust.



192 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xviii.

Thus wailing, slow and sadly she descends, 245  
On either hand a damsel-train attends :  
Full where the dome its shining valves expands,  
Radiant before the gazing Peers she stands ;  
A vail translucent o'er her brow display'd,  
Her beauty seems, and only seems, to shade : 250  
Sudden she lightens in their dazled eyes,  
And sudden flames in ev'ry bosom rise ;  
They send their eager souls with ev'ry look,  
'Till silence thus th' imperial matron broke :

O why ! my son, why now no more appears  
That warmth of soul that urg'd thy younger  
years ? 256

Thy riper days no growing worth impart,  
A man in stature, still a boy in heart !  
Thy well-knit frame unprofitably strong,  
Speaks thee an Hero from an Hero sprung : 260  
But the just Gods in vain those gifts bestow,  
O wise alone in form, and brave in show !  
Heav'n ! could a stranger feel oppression's hand  
Beneath thy roof, and could'st thou tamely  
stand ?



BOOK XVIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 193

If thou the stranger's righteous cause decline, 265  
His is the suff'rance, but the shame is thine.

To whom with filial awe, the Prince returns :

That gen'rous soul with just resentment burns,  
Yet taught by time, my heart has learn'd to glow,

For others good, and melt at others woe : 270  
But impotent these riots to repel,  
I bear their outrage, tho' my soul rebel :  
Helpless amid the snares of death I tread,  
And numbers leagu'd in impious union dread :  
But now no crime is theirs : this wrong pro-  
ceeds

275

From *Irus*, and the guilty *Irus* bleeds.

\*. 275. — — *this wrong procceds*

*From Irus, and the guilty Irus bleeds.]*

*Eustathius* informs us, that we are here to understand the fray between *Irus* and *Ulysses*. *Penelope* refers to the violence intended to be offered to *Ulysses*, when the footstool was thrown at him by *Antinous*; we find that she was acquainted with that assault from her speech in the preceding book. In reality, the Queen was ignorant of the combat between *Irus* and *Ulysses*; but *Telemachus* misunderstands her with design, and makes an Apology for the Suitors, fearing to raise a further disorder, or provoke them to some more violent act of resentment.



194 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xviii.

O would to *Jove* ! or her whose arms display  
The shield of *Jove*, or him who rules the day !  
That yon' proud Suitors, who licentious tread  
These courts, within these courts like *Irus* bled :  
Whose loose head tott'ring, as with wine op-  
prest,

281

Obliquely drops, and nodding knocks his breast ;  
Pow'rless to move, his stagg'ring feet deny  
The coward wretch the privilege to fly.

Then to the Queen *Eurymachus* replies ; 285  
O justly lov'd, and not more fair than wise !  
Should *Greece* thro' all her hundred states survey  
Thy finish'd charms, all *Greece* would own thy  
fway,

\*. 288. — — *all Greece would own thy fway, &c.] Homer expresses Greece by Ιάσον "Αγρος Iäsonian Argos. The word properly (as Eustathius observes) denotes the Morea or Peloponnesus, so called from Iäsus the son of Argus, and I, King of that Country; Strabo agrees with Eustathius. Chapman wonderfully mistakes Homer, and explains his own mistake in a paraphrase of six lines.*

Most wise *Icarius*' daughter, if all those  
That did for *Colchos* vent'rous sail dispose,  
For that rich purchase ; had before but seen  
Earth's richer prize, in th' *Ithacensian* Queen,  
They had not made that voyage ; but to you  
Would all their virtues, all their beings vow.



BOOK XVIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 195

In rival couds contest the glorious prize,  
Dispeopling realms to gaze upon thy eyes: 290  
O woman ! loveliest of the lovely kind,  
In body perfect, and compleat in mind !

Ah me ! returns the Queen, when from this  
shore

*Ulysses* sail'd, then beauty was no more !  
The Gods decreed these eyes no more should  
keep 295

Their wonted grace, but only serve to weep.  
Should he return, whate'er my beauties prove,  
My virtues last ; my brightest charm is love.  
Now, Grief, thou all art mine ! the Gods o'ercaſt  
My soul with woes, that long, ah long must  
last ! 300

Too faithfully my heart retains the day  
That sadly tore my royal Lord away :

I need not say how foreign this is to the original. In reality *Argos* with different epithets, signifies different countries ; Ἀχαΐα "Aegyptus" means *Theſſaly*, and Πελοπόννησος "Aegyptus" *Peloponnesus*; but here it denotes *Greece* universally; for it would appear absurd to tell *Penelope*, that all the *Morea* would admire her beauty, this would lessen the compliment; nor is any reason to be assigned why *Peloponnesus* should admire her more than the rest of the *Greeks*.



## 196 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xviii.

He grasp'd my hand, and oh my spouse! I leave  
Thy arms, (he cry'd) perhaps to find a Grave.:  
Fame speaks the *Trojans* bold ; they boast the  
skill

305

To give the feather'd arrow wings to kill,  
To dart the spear, and guide the rushing car  
With dreadful inroad thro' the walks of war.  
My sentence is gone forth, and 'tis decreed  
Perhaps by righteous heav'n that I must bleed !  
My father, mother, all, I trust to thee ;      311  
To them, to them transfer the love of me :  
But when my son grows man, the royal sway  
Resign, and happy be thy bridal day !

[v. 313. *But when my son grows man, the royal sway  
Resign, and happy be thy bridal day.]*

The original says, *resign the Palace to Telemachus*: this is spoken according to the customs of Antiquity: the wife, upon her second marriage, being obliged to resign the house to the heir of the family. This circumstance is inserted with great judgment: the Suitors were determined to seize it upon marriage with *Penelope*, as appears from the second *Odyssy*.

What mighty labours would he then create,  
To seize his treasures, and divide his state,  
The royal Palace to the Queen convey,  
Or him she blesses in the bridal day?

*Penelope* therefore by this declaration gives the Suitors to understand, that the Palace belonged not to her, but *Telemachus*.



## BOOK XVIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 197

Such were his words ; and *Hymen* now prepares  
To light his torch, and give me up to cares ; 316  
Th' afflictive hand of wrathful *Jove* to bear :  
A wretch the most compleat that breathes the  
air !

Fall'n ev'n below the rights to woman due !  
Careless to please, with insolence ye woo ! 320  
The gen'rous lovers, studious to succeed,  
Bid their whole herds and flocks in banquets  
bleed ; .

This assertion has a double effect ; it is intended to make the Suitors less warm in their addresses ; or if they persist, to set the injustice done to *Telemachus* in open view. The beauty of all the speeches of *Penelope* in this book is so obvious that it needs no explanation ; *Homer* gives her a very amiable character, she is good in every relation of life, merciful to the poor and stranger, a tender mother, and an affectionate wife ; every period is almost a lecture of morality.

My father, mother, all, I trust to thee ;  
To them, to them transfer the love of me.

This shews the duty of the child to the parent ; it may be extended to all persons to whom we owe any duty ; and humanity requires that we should endeavour to ease the burthen of our friends in proportion to their calamities ; we should at all times consult their happiness, but chiefly in the hour of adversity. A friend should be a support to lean upon in all our infirmities.



## 198 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xviii.

By precious gifts the vow sincere display :  
You, only you, make her ye love your prey.

Well-pleas'd Ulysses hears his Queen deceive 325  
The Suitor-train, and raise a thirst to give :

\*. 323. *By precious gifts the vow sincere display :  
You, only you, make her ye love your prey.]*

*Horace*, lib. ii. Sat. 5. makes a very severe reflection upon *Penelope*, and in her person (I say not how justly) upon the whole sex ; he gives the avarice of the Suitors as the sole reason of *Penelope*'s chastity ; and insinuates that women would sell their virtue, if men would be at the expence to buy.

“ Venit enim magnum donandi parca juventus,  
“ Nec tantum Veneris, quantum studiosa culinæ.  
“ Sic tibi Penelope frugi est : quæ si semel uno  
“ De sene gustârit, tecum partita lucellum ;  
“ Ut canis, a corio nunquam absterrebitur uncto.”

*Horace* had this passage in view, and imputes the coldness of *Penelope* to a want of generosity in her admirers. *Diodorus* assures us, that *Venus* had a Temple in *Ægypt* dedicated to her under the title of χρυσὴ Ἀφrodīτην : or golden Venus ; and it is her usual epithet throughout all *Homer*. Near *Memphis* there was an allotment of ground called the field of golden Venus : but it ought not to be concealed, that some persons believe she bears that name from the golden colour of her hair. *Horace*, to give his satyr the greater strength, puts the words into the mouth of the prophet *Tiresias*, a person of unerring veracity.

\*. 325. *Well-pleas'd Ulysses hears his Queen deceive  
The Suitor-train, and raise a thirst to give.]*

This conduct may appear somewhat extraordinary both in *Penelope* and *Ulysses* ; she not only takes, but asks presents from persons whom she never intends to marry : is not this a sign



## BOOK XVIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 199

False hopes she kindles, but those hopes betray,  
And promise, yet elude the bridal day.

either of avarice or falsehood? and is not *Ulysses* equally guilty, who rejoices at it? But in reality, *Penelope* is no way faulty; she deceives the Suitors with hopes of marriage by accepting these presents, but it is for this sole reason that she accepts them; she intends to give them false hopes, and by that method to defer the nuptial hour: it is not injustice, but an equitable reprisal; they had violently wasted her treasures, and she artfully recovers part of them by a piece of refined management. *Dacier* defends her after another method: she believes that *Penelot*: thus acts, not out of interest but honour; it was a disgrace to so great a Princess to have so many admirers, and never to receive from their hands such presents as custom not only allows, but commands; neither is *Ulysses* blameable, who rejoices at his wife's policy. He understood her intent, and being artful himself, smiles to see her artfulness.

*Plutarch* in his treatise of reading Poems, vindicates *Ulysses* very much in the same way: if (says that Author) *Ulysses* rejoiced at *Penelope*'s art in drawing presents from the Suitors out of avarice, he discovers himself to be a sordid profligate of his wife; but if through a wise foresight he hoped by her acceptance of the presents, to get the Suitors more into his power, by lulling them into security, and laying all their suspicions asleep, through a sudden prospect of marriage; if this occasioned his joy, this joy arising from her artful management, and from a full confidence in his wife, is no ways blameable, but proceeds from a sufficient and laudable cause. In short, the Suitors were enemies, and nothing could be practised dishonourably against them, that either *Ulysses* or *Penelope* could act consistently with their own honour.

[*y. 327. False hopes she kindles.*] It is certain that the words in the Greek will bear a double construction, and Σέλγη θυμωμενούσις επίτοι may refer either to *Penelope* or *Ulysses*. *Eustathius* thinks they are spoken of *Ulysses*; then the meaning is,



200 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book xviii.

While yet she speaks, the gay *Antinous* cries,  
Offspring of Kings, and more than woman  
wise!

339

'Tis right; 'tis man's prerogative to give,  
And custom bids thee without shame receive;  
Yet never, never, from thy dome we move,  
'Till *Hymen* lights the torch of spousal love.

The Peers dispatch their heralds to convey 335  
The gifts of love; with speed they take the way.  
A robe *Antinous* gives of shining dyes,  
The varying hues in gay confusion rise  
Rich from the artist's hand! twelve clasps of gold  
Close to the less'ning waist the vest infold; 340  
Down from the swelling loins, the vest unbound  
Floats in bright waves redundant o'er the ground.

that *Ulysses* comforted himself with her amusing words, while he formed a design very different from what her words expressed; but *Dacier* refers them to *Penelope*, perhaps with better reason: θάγη depends upon φέτο in the preceding line; and by thus understanding it, the construction becomes easy and natural: and the sentence means, that *Penelope*'s words flattered the Suitors into hopes of marriage, while her thoughts were very distant from complying with their inclinations: this interpretation best agrees with the general design of *Penelope*, which was to act an artful part, and neither comply, nor absolutely refuse their addresses.



## BOOK XVIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 201

A bracelet rich with gold, with amber gay,  
That shot effulgence like the solar ray,  
*Eurymachus* presents: and ear-rings bright, 345  
With triple stars, that cast a trembling light.

*Pisander* bears a necklace wrought with art ;  
And ev'ry Peer, expressive of his heart,  
A gift bestows : this done, the Queen ascends,  
And slow behind her damsel-train attends. 350

Then to the dance they form the vocal strain,  
'Till *Hesperus* leads forth the starry train ;  
And now he raiseth, as the day-light fades,  
His golden circlet in the deep'ning shades :  
Three vases heap'd with copious fires display 355  
O'er all the palace a fictitious day ;

\*. 355. *Three vases heap'd with copious fires display  
O'er all the Palace a fictitious day.]*

The word in the Greek is λαυρῖνη, or a vase which was placed upon a tripod, upon which the Antients burnt dry and often-times odiferous wood, to give at once both perfume and light. *Eustathius* explains it by χυτόνες, or a vessel raised on feet in the nature of an hearth. *Hesychius* explains λαυρῖνη, an hearth placed in the middle of the house or hall, on which they burnt dry wood with intermingled torches to enlighten it. It is strange that there is no mention of lamps, but only torches, in *Homer*; undoubtedly lamps were not yet in use in *Greece*, although much earlier found out by the *Hebrews*:



202 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xviii.

From space to space the torch wide-beaming  
burns,

And sprightly damsels trim the rays by turns.

To whom the King : Ill suits your sex to stay  
Alone with men ! ye modest maids, away ! 360  
Go, with the Queen the spindle guide ; or cull  
(The partners of her cares) the silver wool ;  
Pe it my task the torches to supply,  
Ev'n till the morning lamp adorns the sky ;  
Ev'n till the morning, with unwearied care, 365  
Sleepless I watch ; for I have learn'd to bear.

Scornful they heard : *Melanthes*, fair and young,  
(*Melanthes*, from the loins of *Dolius* sprung,

thus *Exod.* xxv. 6. oil is mentioned, and enjoined to be used  
in giving light to the sanctuary.

\*. 359. — — — *Ill suits your sex to stay*  
*Alone with men ! ye modest maids, away !]*

*Homer* is perpetually giving us lessons of decency and morality. It may be thought that this interlude between *Ulysses* and the damsels of *Penelope* is foreign to the action of the *Odyssey*; but in reality it is far from it: the Poet undertook to describe the disorders which the absence of a Prince occasions in his family; this passage is an instance of it; and *Homer* with good judgment makes these wantons declare their contempt of *Ulysses*, and their favour to their Suitors, that we may acknowledge the justice of their punishment in the subsequent parts of the *Odyssey*.



BOOK XVIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 203

Who with the Queen her years an infant led,  
With the soft fondness of a daughter bred) 370  
Chiefly derides: regardless of the cares  
Her Queen endures, polluted joys she shares  
Nocturnal with *Eurymachus*! With eyes  
That speak disdain, the wanton thus replies.

Oh ! whither wanders thy distemper'd brain,  
Thou bold intruder on a princely train ? 376  
Hence to the vagrant's rendezvous repair ;  
Or shun in some black forge the midnight air.

\*. 377. *Hence to the vagrant's rendezvous repair ;*  
*Or shun in some black forge the midnight air.]*

I flatter myself that I have given the true sense of χαλκήος δόμος, and λέσχη: in *Greece* the beggars in winter retired by night to publick forges for their warmth, or to some rendezvous where they entertained themselves as it were in a common assembly. *Eustathius* explains λέσχη to be a publick place without any doors, where beggars were used to lodge. *Hesychius* gives us several interpretations of the word, that it signifies an assembly, a conversation; it implies also publick stoves or baths; and *Eustathius* informs us from *Aristophanes*, that beggars used to take up their lodgings in the publick baths, as well as in these places mentioned by *Homēr*; χαλκήος δόμος is an office of men that work in brass. He further observes that these two places are used after the same manner in *Hesiod*.

Πάρε δ' οὐτι χάλκεον θῶκον, καὶ εἰπὲ αἰλία λέσχην  
“Ωρη χειμερίη, ὑπότε κρύος ἄνθρας εἴργως  
Ισχάνι.—



## 204 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book XVIII.

Proceeds this boldness from a turn of soul,  
Or flows licentious from the copious bowl? 380  
Is it that vanquish'd *Irus* swells thy mind?  
A foe may meet thee of a braver kind,  
Who, short'ning with a storm of blows thy stay,  
Shall send thee howling all in blood away!

To whom with frowns: O impudent in wrong! 385

Thy Lord shall curb that insolence of tongue;  
Know to *Telemachus* I tell th' offence:  
The scourge, the scourge shall lash thee into sense.

With conscious shame they hear the stern rebuke,

Nor longer durst sustain the sov'reign look. 390

It may not be improper to observe, that *παρ δὲ θεος δῶκος χάλκιον* is very ill translated by *Accede Aeneam sedem*, in the *Latin* version; it should be *fuge officinam Aerarium*.

¶. 381. *Is it that vanquish'd Irus swells thy mind?*] The word in *Homer* is *αἰλύνει*, which is used in various places; sometimes (observes *Plutarch* in his treatise upon reading Poems) it signifies *being disquieted in mind*,

"Ως φατ' ἡ αἰλύνει αἴπεισθαι, τείμετο δ' αἰνῶς.

In other places it implies *an insolent joy, or boasting*; and then he quotes this verse,

"Η αἰλύνει ὅτι Ιρος εἰκήσας.



## BOOK XVIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 205

Then to the servile task the Monarch turns  
His royal hands: each torch refulgent burns  
With added day : meanwhile in museful mood,  
Absorpt in thought, on vengeance fix'd he stood.  
And now the Martial Maid, by deeper wrongs 395  
To rouse *Ulysses*, points the Suitors tongues,  
Scornful of age, to taunt the virtuous man:  
Thoughtless and gay, *Eurymachus* began.

Hear me (he cries) confederates and friends !  
Some God no doubt this stranger kindly  
sends ;

400

¶. 395. *And now the Martial Maid, by deeper wrongs  
To rouse Ulysses, points the Suitors tongues.]*

It may be thought very unjustifiable in *Homer*, to introduce *Minerva* exciting the Suitors to violence. *Dacier* defends the Poet by shewing that the sentiment is conformable to true Theology : and the all-wise Author of our being is pleased sometimes to harden the hearts of the wicked, (or rather to permit them to harden their own hearts) that they may fill up the measure of their crimes, and be ripe for judgment : yet we are not to imagine, that any person is necessitated to be wicked : it is not the hardening the heart that originally makes men impious, but they are first impious, and then they are delivered over to an hardness of heart.

But *Homer* may be justified another way ; and *Minerva* may be understood to act thus in favour of *Ulysses*: the Goddess of Wisdom infatuates the Suitors to insult that Hero, and hasten their own destruction.

¶. 400. *Some God, no doubt, this stranger kindly sends.] Aristotle affirms that Homer is the father of Poetry; not only of*



## 206 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xviii.

The shining baldness of his head survey,  
It aids our torch-light, and reflects the ray.—

the Epick, but also of the Dramatick ; that he taught how to write Tragedy in the *Iliad*, and Comedy by several short sketches in the *Odysssey*. *Eustathius* here remarks, that he likewise gave a model for *Satyr*, of which the *Cyclops* of *Euripides* still extant is an example ; (which is a satyrick Poem founded upon the story of *Polypheme* in *Homer*.) I confess my eye is not sharp enough to see the dignity of these railleries ; and it may be thought that *Homer* is the father of another kind of Poetry, I mean the *Farce*, and that these low conceits are no way to be justified, but by being put into the mouths of the Suitors, persons of no dignity or character. *Longinus* brings such descriptions of the Suitors, as instances of the decay of *Homer*'s genius. When that declines (observes that Author) Poets commonly please themselves with painting Manners ; such is *Homer*'s description of the lives led by the Suitors in the Palace of *Ulysses* : for in reality all that description is a kind of Comedy, wherein the different characters of men are painted.

[*v. 401. The shining baldness of his head survey,  
It aids our torch-light, and reflects the ray.]*

This in *Dacier*'s judgment is a raillery purely satirical ; it is drawn from the shining glass of an old man's bald head. But if this be purely satirical, to be a satyrist is to be a bad man : to rally natural infirmities is inhumanity : old age is venerable, and the bald head as well as the gray hair is an honour, and ought not to be the subject of raillery. I doubt not but *Homer* put it into the mouth of *Eurymachus* to make him more odious, and to shew us that the same man who invades his Prince's property, insults the stranger, and outrages the poor ; pays no deference to old age, but is base enough to contemn what he ought to honour. Vice and folly are the province of Satyr, not human infirmity.



## BOOK XVIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 207

Then to the King that levell'd haughty *Troy*.—  
Say, if large hire can tempt thee to employ  
Those hands in works ; to tend the rural trade,  
To dress the walk, and form th' embow'ring  
shade ?

406

So food and rayment constant will I give : ]  
But idly thus thy soul prefers to live, }  
And starve by strolling, not by work to thrive. ]

To whom incens'd : Should we, O Prince,  
engage

410

In rival tasks beneath the burning rage  
Of summer suns ; were both constrain'd to wield,  
Foodless, the scythe along the burthen'd field ;

¶. 412. — — *were both constrain'd to wield,*  
*Foodless, the scythe along the burthen'd field.]*

I doubt not but such employments as these, now only suitable to low life, will seem mean to many Readers, and unworthy of the dignity of Epick Poetry : it is no defence to say that they are mentioned by a beggar, and therefore agreeable to his character : the words are addressed to a Prince, and suppose that a skill in such works was not unusual to persons of eminent stations ; otherwise the challenge of *Ulysses* is ridiculously absurd. Who could forbear laughing, if he should hear one of our beggars challenge a Peer, to plough or mow with him all day without eating ? The truth is, the greatest persons followed such employments without any diminution of their dignities ; nay, a skill in such works as Agriculture



Or should we labour, while the ploughshare  
wounds,

With steers of equal strength, th' allotted  
grounds :

415

was a glory even to a King : *Homer* here places it upon a level with military science, and the knowledge of the cultivation of the ground is equalled to glory in war. In the preface to the *Pastorals of Virgil*, (but not written by Mr. *Dryden*) there is a passage that shews that the same simplicity of manners prevailed amongst the antient *Latins*, as amongst the antient *Greeks* :  
“ It ought not (says that Author) to surprise a modern writer,  
“ that Kings laid down their first rudiments of government  
“ in tending their mute subjects, their herds and flocks : nor  
“ ought it to seem strange that the master of the horse to  
“ King *Latinus* in the ninth *Aeneid* was found in the homely  
“ employment of cleaving blocks, when news of the first  
“ skirmish between the *Trojans* and *Latins* was brought to  
“ him.” This passage fully vindicates *Homer*, and shews that such employments were no dishonour to the greatest persons ; but there are two errors in the quotation ; it is not taken from the ninth, but the seventh *Aeneid* ; nor is *Tyrrheus*, who cleaves the blocks, master of the horse to King *Latinus*, but the intendant of his flocks ; or as *Dryden* translates it,

*Tyrrheus, chief ranger to the Latian King.*

“ — — Tyrrheusque pater, cui regia parent  
“ Armenta, & latè custodia credita campi.”

*Tyrrheus* is no otherwise a warriour, than as a deer under his charge, being killed, engages him in a quarrel, and he arms the rusticks to encounter the *Trojans* who slew it.

“ — — — vocat agmina Tyrrheus  
Quadrifidam quercum cuncis ut forte coactis  
Scindebat” — — —



## BOOK XVIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 209

Beneath my labours, how thy wond'ring eyes  
Might see the fable field at once arise !  
Should *Jove* dire war unloose ; with spear, and  
shield,

And nodding helm, I tread th' ensanguin'd field,  
Fierce in the van : then wou'dst thou, wou'dst  
thou,—say,—

42Q

Misname me, glutton, in that glorious day ?  
No, thy ill-judging thoughts the brave disgrace ;  
'Tis thou injurious art, not I am base.  
Proud to seem brave among a coward-train !  
But know, thou art not valorous, but vain. 425  
Gods ! should the stern *Ulysses* rise in might,  
These gates would seem too narrow for thy flight.

While yet he speaks, *Eurymachus* replies,  
With indignation flashing from his eyes.

*Tyrrheus*, the foster-father of the beast,  
Then clench'd an hatchet in his horny fist ;  
But held his hand from the descending stroke,  
And left his wedge within the cloven oak.

It is true, though *Tyrrheus* was not master of the horse to the King, yet his office was a post of dignity, otherwise it had been very easy for *Virgil* to have given him a more noble employment.



210 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book xviii.

Slave, I with justice might deserve the wrong,  
Should I not punish that opprobrious tongue, 431  
Irrev'rent to the Great, and uncontroll'd,  
Art thou from wine, or innate folly, bold ?  
Perhaps, these outrages from *Irus* flow,  
A worthless triumph o'er a worthless foe ! 435

He said, and with full force a footstool threw :  
Whirl'd from his arm with erring rage it flew ;  
*Ulysses*, cautious of the vengeful foe,  
Stoops to the ground, and disappoints the blow.  
Not so a youth who deals the goblet round, 440  
Full on his shoulder it inflicts a wound,  
Dash'd from his hand the sounding goblet flies,  
He shrieks, he reels, he falls, and breathless lies.

Then wild uproar and clamour mounts the sky,  
,Till mutual thus the Peers indignant cry ; 445  
O had this stranger sunk to realms beneath,  
To the black realms of darkness and of death,  
Ere yet he trod these shores ! to strife he draws  
Peer against Peer ; and what the weighty cause ?  
A vagabond ! for him the great destroy 450  
In vile ignoble jars, the feast of joy.



## BOOK XVIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 211

To whom the stern *Telemachus* uprose !  
Gods! what wild folly from the goblet flows ?  
Whence this unguarded openness of soul,  
But from the licence of the copious bowl? 455  
Or heav'n delusion sends : but hence, away !  
Force I forbear, and without force obey.

Silent, abash'd, they hear the stern rebuke,  
'Till thus *Amphinomus* the silence broke.

True are his words, and he whom truth offend  
fends . . . . 460

Not with *Telemachus*, but truth contends ;  
Let not the hand of violence invade  
The rev'rend stranger, or the spotless maid ;

\*. 457. *Force I forbear, and without force obey.*] This is very artful in *Telemachus*; he had spoken warmly in defence of *Ulysses*, and he apprehends lest he should have provoked the Suitors too far; he therefore softens his expression, to avoid suspicions of a latent cause, why he interests himself so vigorously in vindication of a beggar, against the Princes of the country. Besides, too obstinate an opposition might have provoked the Suitors to have continued all night in the Palace, which would have hindered *Ulysses* and *Telemachus* fromconcerting their measures to bring about their destruction: *Telemachus* therefore, to induce them to withdraw, uses menaces, but menaces approaching to persuasion; if he had used violence, matters must immediately have come to extremities.



## 212 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xviii.

Retire we hence ! but crown with rosy wine  
The flowing goblet to the pow'rs divine ;      465  
Guard he his guest beneath whose roof he stands  
This justice, this the social right demands.

The Peers assent ; the goblet *Mulius* crown'd  
With purple juice, and bore in order round ;  
Each Peer successive his libation pours      470  
To the blest Gods that fill th' aereal bow'r's ;

\*. 470. *Each Peer successive his libation pours  
To the blest Gods ———]*

We have already observed that libations were made to the Gods before and after meals ; here we see the Suitors offer their libation before they retire to repose. We are not to ascribe this religious act to the piety of these debauchees, but to the customs of the times ; they practise not true religion, but only the exteriors of it ; they are not pious, but fashionable.

The action of this book is comprehended in a very short duration of time ; it begins towards the close of the day, and ends at the time when the Suitors withdraw to repose ; this is the evening and part of the night of the thirty-ninth day.

In general, this book is in the *Greek* very beautiful : the combat between *Irus* and *Ulysses* is naturally described ; it is indeed between beggars, but yet not without dignity, it being almost of the same nature with the single combats practised amongst Heroes in their most solemn games ; as is evident from that in the *Iliad*, at the funeral of *Patroclos*. I could wish *Homer* had not condescended to those low jests and mean railleries towards the conclusion : it is true, they are not without effect, as they agree with the characters of the Suitors

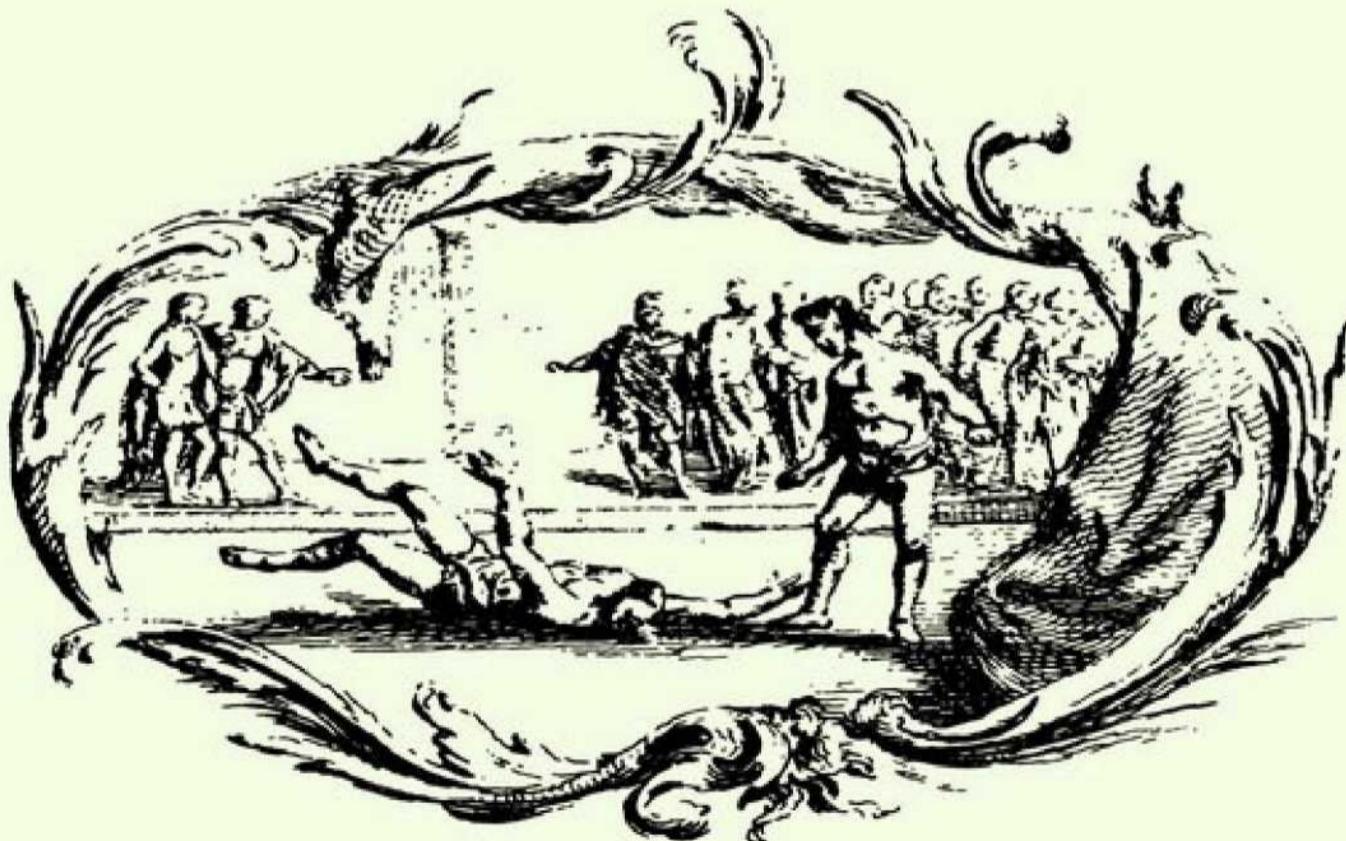


BOOK XVIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 213

Then fwill'd with wine, with noise the crowds  
• obey,

And rushing forth tumultuous, reel away.

and make *Ulysses* a spectator of the disorders of his own family, and provoke him to a speedy vengeance: but might not more serious provocations have been found out, such as might become the gravity and majesty of Epick Poetry? or if gaiety was essential to his characters, are quibbles so too? These may be thought to be of the same level with those conceits which *Milton* puts into the mouth of the Devil, and which disgrace his Poem. But the dignity, the tenderness, and justness of the sentiments, in all the speeches of *Penelope*, more than atone for the low railleries of *Eurymachus*.





THE  
NINETEENTH BOOK  
OF THE  
ODYSSEY.

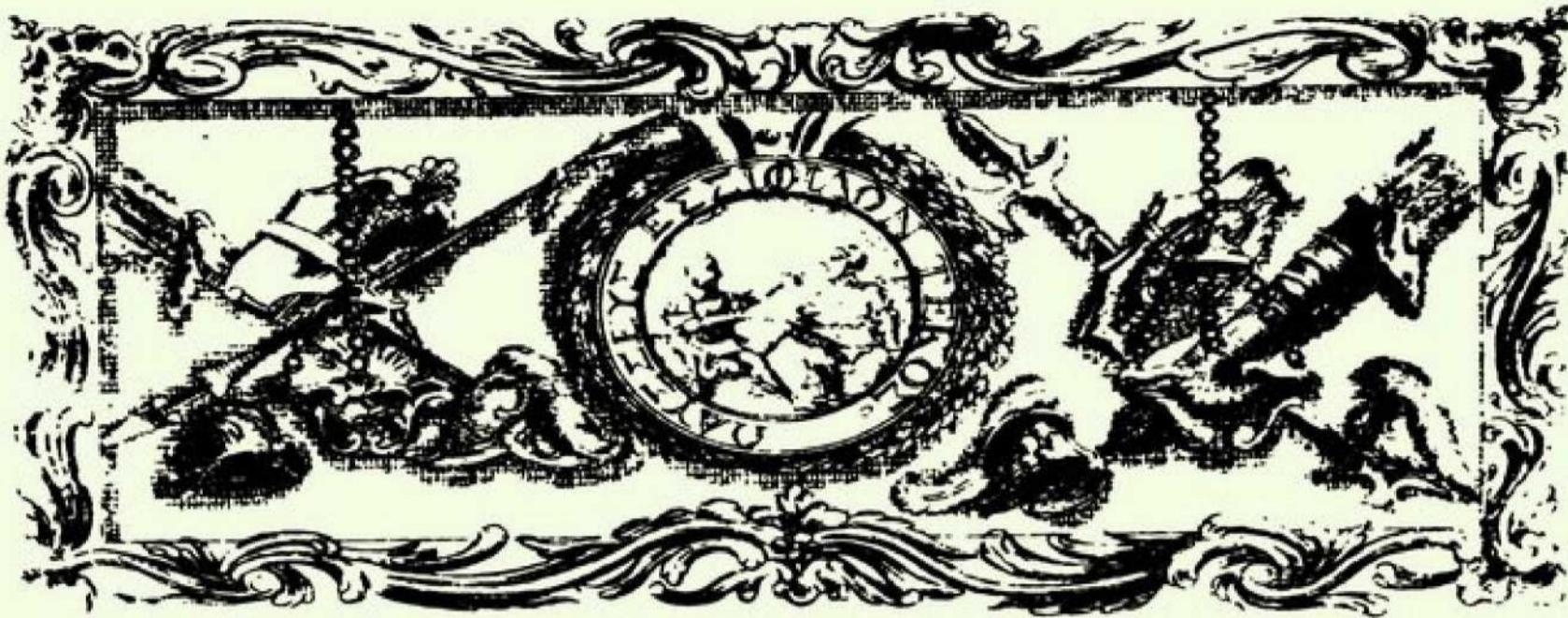




## The A R G U M E N T.

### The Discovery of *Ulysses* to *Euryklea*.

**U**LYSSES and his son remove the weapons out of the Armory. Ulysses in conversation with Penelope gives a fictitious account of his adventures; then assures her he had formerly entertained her husband in Crete; and describes exactly his person and dress, affirms to have heard of him in Phœacia and Thesprotia; and that his return is certain, and within a month. He then goes to bathe, and is attended by Euryklea, who discovers him to be Ulysses by the scar upon his leg, which he formerly received in hunting the wild boar on Parnassus. The Poet inserts a digression, relating that accident, with all its particulars,



THE  
\*NINETEENTH BOOK  
OF THE  
ODYSSEY.

CONSULTING secret with the blue-ey'd  
Maid,

Still in the dome divine *Ulysses* stay'd :  
Revenge mature for act inflam'd his breast ;  
And thus the Son, the fervent Sire address.

\* The Scene still continues in the Palace of *Ulysses*; but new persons are introduced to carry on the action, and diversify the story: this book opens with a repetition from the sixteenth; the Antients marked it with an Alterism, without any Obelisk, to shew that it was here inserted with propriety: as we draw nearer the conclusion of the Poem, the repetitions are more frequent. *Virgil* has generally avoided them, and indeed it may be observed, that these two Poets differ in nothing



218 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xix.

Instant convey those steely stores of war 5  
To distant rooms, dispos'd with secret care :  
The cause demanded by the Suitor-train,  
To sooth their fears a specious reason feign :  
Say, since *Ulysses* left his natal coast,  
Obscene with smoke, their beamy lustre lost, 10  
His arins deform'd, the roof they won't adorn :  
From the glad walls inglorious lumber torn.  
Suggest, that *Jove* the peaceful thought inspir'd,  
Lest they by fight of swords to fury fir'd ;  
Dishonest wounds, or violence of soul, 15  
Defame the bridal feast, and friendly bowl.

more than the manner of their elocution : *Virgil* is full, but *Homer* even overflows ; and this agrees with their general characters. *Homer* is like those Painters of whom *Apelles* used to complain, that they left nothing to be imagined by the spectator, and made too accurate representations ; but *Virgil* is like *Timantes* in *Pliny*. *Timanti plurimum adfuit ingenii, in omnibus operibus ejus intelligitur plus semper quam pingitur :* and again, *ostendit etiam quæ occultat.*

*Eustathius* observes, that the unexpected opportunity to remove the arms in the absence of the Suitors, occasions this repetition : in the sixteenth book *Ulysses* told *Telemachus* he would give a sign when he should make the removal, despairing of an opportunity to give a publick direction, without danger from the Suitors ; he therefore wisely lays hold of the present hour which happily favours his desires, and enjoins the arms to be removed immediately.



The Prince obedient to the sage command,  
To *Euryklea* thus : the female band  
In their apartments keep ; secure the doors :  
These swarthy arms among the covert stores 20  
Are seemlier hid ; my thoughtless youth they  
blame,  
Imbrown'd with vapour of the smould'ring flame.

In happy hour, (pleas'd *Euryklea* cries)  
Tutor'd by early woes, grow early wise !  
Inspect with sharpen'd sight, and frugal care, 25  
Your patrimonial wealth, a prudent heir.  
But who the lighted taper will provide,  
(The female train retir'd) your toils to guide ?  
Without infringing hospitable right,  
This guest (he cry'd) shall bear the guiding  
light : 30

I cheer no lazy vagrants with repast ;  
They share the meal that earn it ere they taste.

\*. 18. — — — *the female band*  
*In their apartments keep, &c.]*

It is not without sufficient reason that *Telemachus* distrusts the maids ; many of them were in the interest of the Suitors : it was therefore necessary to conceal the place to which the arms were conveyed, lest they should betray the secret. *Eustathius.*



He said ; from female ken she strait secures  
The purpos'd deed, and guards the bolted doors :  
Auxiliar to his son, *Ulysses* bears                          35 }  
The plamy-crested helms, and pointed spears,  
With shields indented deep in-glorious wars.                  }

*Minerva* viewless on her charge attends,  
And with her golden lamp his toil befriends,

\*. 38. *Minerva — with her golden lamp —*. The office here ascribed to *Minerva* gave great offence to *Rapin*, and he censured ie as mean, and unworthy of the Goddess ; but *Eustathius* fully vindicates *Homer*; *Pallas* is here an allegorical Deity intended by the Poet to express the wisdom of *Ulysses*; he acts with as much prudence as if *Minerva* herself guided him in all his ways. We are to gather from this description, that *Ulysses* formed all the actions of this night with the utmost wisdom, or according to the Greek proverb, ἐπί νυκτὶ βελῆν, the *councils of this night* were regulated with the exactest prudence and secrecy. *Spondanus* observes, that *Callimachus*, a statuary in *Athens*, made an image of *Minerva* according to this picture in *Homer*: she held a lamp of gold, which was filled with an oil of such an unwasting nature, as not to want to be replenished in the space of a whole year. See *lib. i.* of *Pausanias*. *Dacier* judges, that though a lamp was unknown in the days of *Ulysses*, yet it might be not so in the days of *Homer*, and therefore he might speak of it; for instance, the trumpet was not known in the *Trojan war*, yet *Homer* mentions it, because it was used in his age. But this is no answer; for *Homer* does not say that the trumpet was used during the siege of *Troy*; if he had, he would have been guilty of a gross anachronism, but he speaks of it by way of allusion, as a thing well known in his time. Here therefore the case is different; for *Ulysses* is the person who is supposed to make



BOOK XIX. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 221

Not such the sickly beams, which unsincere, 40  
Gild the gross vapour of this nether sphere !  
A present Deity the Prince confess'd,  
And rap'd with ecstasy the Sire address'd.

What miracle thus dazzles with surprise !  
Distinct in rows the radiant columns rise : 45  
The walls where-e'er my wond'ring sight I turn,  
And roofs, amidst a blaze of glory burn !  
Some visitant of pure ethereal race,  
With his bright presence deigns the dome to  
grace.

use of this lamp, and *Dacier* allows that it was unknown in his age, and consequently he ought not to use it at all. It may therefore perhaps be most probable, that *Callimachus* did not form his statue from this original ; or if this be not allowed, that he fell into an error, and gave the Goddess a lamp instead of a torch.

I will only further add, that this office of *Minerva* may be vindicated from all meanness, by observing that it is not the bare act of carrying the torch which the Goddess here executes ; she improves it into a Miracle ; the whole Palace is enlightened with a celestial fire, and *Ulysses* and *Telemachus* gather full assurances of her favour and success from that miraculous illumination : this circumstance raises the description out of lowness into dignity.

\*. 48. *Some visitant of pure ethereal race.*] *Eustathius* gives us a twofold explication of the words,

Αἰτή ταὶ δίκη εἰς Σεῦ ——

They imply either that the Goddess *Themis* descended, or



222 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xviii.

Be calm, replies the Sire ; to none impart, 50  
But oft revolve the vision in thy heart :  
Celestials, mantl'd in excess of light,  
Can visit unapproach'd by mortal sight.  
Seek thou repose ; whilst here I sole remain,  
To explore the conduct of the female train : 55  
The pensive Queen perchance desires to know  
The series of my toils, to sooth her woe.

With tapers flaming day his train attends,  
His bright alcove th' obsequious youth ascends :  
Soft slumb'rous shades his drooping eye-lids close,  
'Till on her eastern throne *Aurora* glows. 61

Whilst, forming plans of death, *Ulysses* stay'd,  
In council secret with the Martial Maid ;

that it is the custom of celestial powers to manifest themselves in such illuminations, without appearing visibly. The latter interpretation seems most natural, and makes the construction easy, whereas the other is scarce to be understood without supplying ἀπὸ before Σοῦ : otherwise it must be allowed, that the former opinion is not unhappy : *Ulysses* tells his son, that the Goddess of justice is sent by the Gods to assist him in taking vengeance on the Suitors : *Themis* is a very proper Deity to be introduced upon such an occasion, and shews that *Ulysses* proceeded upon the strictest rules of equity, in the distribution of his rewards and punishments. But the passage will not admit this sense, it being evidently *Pallas*, not *Themis*, who appears.



## BOOK XVIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 223

Attendant Nymphs in beaucous order wait  
The Queen, descending from her bow'r of state.  
Her cheeks the warmer blush of *Venus* wear, 66  
Chasten'd with coy *Diana*'s pensive air.  
An iv'ry seat with silver ringlets grac'd,  
By fam'd *Icmalius* wrought, the menials plac'd :  
With iv'ry silver'd-thick the foot-stool shone, 70  
O'er which the panther's various hide was thrown.  
The sov'reign seat with graceful air she press'd ;  
To different tasks their toil the Nymphs address'd :  
The golden goblets some, and some restor'd  
From stains of luxury the polish'd board : 75  
These to remove th' expiring embers came,  
While those with unctuous fir foment the flame.

'Twas then *Melanthe* with imperious mien  
Renew'd th' attack, incontinent of spleen :  
Avaunt, she cry'd, offensive to my sight ! 80  
Deem not in ambush here to lurk by night,

y. 69. *By fam'd Icmalius wrought* — ] Homer in both his Poems takes all opportunities of celebrating the famous artisans of Antiquity ; I doubt not but most of them were his particular friends, and to do them honour, he gave them place in his works, and rendered their names and his own gratitude immortal. We may likewise learn the nature of the noblest pieces of art in Homer's days, from his Poetry.



224 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xix.

Into the woman-state asquint to pry ;  
A day-devourer, and an ev'ning spy !  
Vagrant be gone ! before this blazing brand  
Shall urge — and wav'd it hissing in her hand. 85

Th' insulted Hero rolls his wrathful eyes,  
And, Why, so turbulent of soul ? he cries ;  
Can these lean shrivel'd limbs unnerv'd with age,  
These poor but honest rags, enkindle rage ?  
In crowds, we wear the badge of hungry Fate ;  
And beg, degraded from superior state ! 91  
Constrain'd ! a rent-charge on the rich I live ;  
Reduc'd to crave the good I once could give :  
A Palace, wealth, and slaves I late possess'd,  
And all that makes the Great be call'd the bleſſ'd :  
My gate, an emblem of my open soul, 96  
Embrac'd the poor, and dealt a bounteous dole.

¶. 82. *Into the woman-state asquint to pry.]* This is the true reason why *Melanthe* is out of humour (says Madam *Dacier* :) She had some affairs upon her hands, which demanded no witnesses, meaning the vicious commerce between her and *Eurymachus*. Women never forgive their own sex a frailty. *Dacier* is undoubtedly in an error ; *Eurymachus* in the end of the last book left the Palace, and therefore *Melanthe* could not speak out of any apprehensions of having a stop put to her affairs this night, by the presence of *Ulysses*.



## BOOK XIX. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 225

Scorn not the sad reverse, injurious maid !  
'Tis Jove's high will, and be his will obey'd !  
Nor think thyself exempt : that rosy prime 100  
Must share the general doom of with'ring time :  
To some new channel soon, the changeful tide }  
Of royal grace th' offended Queen may guide ; }  
And her lov'd Lord unplume thy tow'ring pride. }  
Or were he dead, 'tis wisdom to beware : 105  
Sweet blooms the Prince beneath *Apollo's* care ;  
Your deeds with quick impartial eye surveys ;  
Potent to punish what he cannot praise.

¶. 106. *Sweet blooms the Prince beneath Apollo's care.*] It may be asked why *Telemachus* is said to owe the preservation of his life to *Apollo*? *Eustathius* answers, that he was called "Ο Σεος κρεοτρόφος" by Antiquity ; and that *Daphne* from being his favourite was named κρεοθαλεία : but perhaps that epithet was appropriated to *Apollo*, because all immature deaths in the male sex were ascribed to him, as they were to *Diana* in the female ; it may therefore be said with great propriety that it is owing to the favour of *Apollo*, that *Telemachus* had not died an immature death, or that he was arrived to manhood : *Eustathius* adds, that *Apollo* as he is the Sun, may be called the nourisher of all things that breathe, as well as of the inanimate creation ; it is owing to his influence that every being comes to maturity, and in this sense likewise he may be called Κρεοτρόφος. What *Eustathius* ascribes to *Daphne*, *Dacier* applies to *Diana*, and tells us, that she was called Κρεοθαλεία, and that the Antients celebrated a festival in her honour for the health of their infants.



Her keen reproach had reach'd the Sov'reign's  
ear ;

Loquacious insolent ! she cries, forbear : 110  
To thee the purpose of my soul I told ;  
Venial discourse, unblam'd, with him to hold :  
The storied labours of my wand'ring Lord,  
To soothe my grief he haply may record : 114  
Yet him, my guest, thy venom'd rage hath stung :  
Thy head shall pay the forfeit of thy tongue !

\*. 110. *Loquacious insolent !* —— ] Were this place to be rendered literally, it would be thus, *Θοῦ bold impudent bitch*; *Ὥρσαλήν κύον ἀδηίς*. It is spoken by *Penelope*. In our age it is an expression so vulgar, as not to be uttered in common conversation, much less in Epick Poetry : it is true, it fully expresses the height of impudence, and in *Homer's* time it was no more mean, than calling a coward a *deer*, and both the expressions are joined together in the first of the *Iliad*.

Thou dog in forehad, but in heart a deer.

It is there spoken by *Achilles*: and in another place of the *Iliad* *Jupiter* applies it to his wife, and calls *Juno* an impudent bitch ; a plain indication that the expression was not mean, as it is at this day, because it was used by the greatest of Heroes, and the supreme of Gods.

\*. 116. *Thy head shall pay the forfeit of thy tongue !*] The expression in the Greek is remarkable.

———— "Ο σῆν κεφαλὴν ἀναυάξεις.

*Which you shall wipe upon your own head*, or as *Eustathius* explains it, “ a crime which you shall make to cleave to your own head : ” a similar expression (adds the same Author) occurs in *Sophocles*.



BOOK XIX. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 227

But thou on whom my palace cares depend,  
*Eury nome*, regard the stranger-friend :  
A feast, soft spread with fury spoils, prepare ;  
Due-distant, for us both to speak, and hear. 120

The menial Fair obeys with duteous haste :  
A feast adorn'd with fury spoils she plac'd :  
Due-distant for discourse the Hero sat ;  
When thus the Sov'reign from her chair of  
state :

Reveal, obsequious to my first demand, 125  
Thy name, thy lineage, and thy native land.

He thus : O Queen ! whose far-resounding  
fame,  
Is bounded only by the starry frame,

—— καὶ ποὺ λεπτῶν κάρα  
Κηλιδας ἐξέμαξεν.

From whence it appears, that the blood that was found upon the sword, was wiped upon the head of the slain ; an intimation that his own blood was fallen upon the head of the deceased, and the living were free from it. This is a very remarkable custom, and there are many expressions like it in the scriptures ; namely *his blood be upon his own head*. It was customary amongst the Romans to wash their hands, in token of innocence and purity from blood : thus the Roman Governour washed his hands, and said, *I am innocent of the blood of this just person.*



228 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book xix.

Consummate pattern of imperial sway,  
Whose pious rule a warlike race obey !                    130

In wavy gold thy summer vales are dress'd ;  
Thy autumns bend with copious fruit oppress'd :  
With flocks and herds each grassy plain is stor'd ;  
And fish of ev'ry fin thy seas afford ;                    134

Their affluent joys the grateful realms confess ;  
And bless the Pow'r that still delights to bless.  
Gracious permit this pray'r, imperial Dame !  
Forbear to know my lineage, or my name :  
Urge not this breast to heave, these eyes to weep ;  
In sweet oblivion let my sorrow sleep !                    140

My woes awak'd will violate your ear ;  
And to this gay censorious train appear  
A winy vapour melting in a tear.                         }

\*. 129. *Consummate pattern of imperial sway.*] Homer here gives an amiable picture of a mild and just Government : it is a truth certain and universal, where the subject enjoys the fruits of his industry, the earth will always be well cultivated, and bring forth in abundance ; the sea will furnish the land with plenty of fishes, and men will plant when they are sure to gather the fruits. It is the constant observation of all travellers, the worst situation under an easy government enjoys more plenty, and is fuller of inhabitants, than the best soil and happiest situation under an arbitrary power. This whole passage is very beautiful, and the more beautiful because the words proceed from the mouth of a King.



## BOOK XIX. HOMER's ODYSSEY. 229

Their gifts the Gods resum'd (the Queen re-join'd)

Exterior grace, and energy of mind ; 145

When the dear partner of my nuptial joy,

Auxiliar troops combin'd, to conquer *Troy*.

My Lord's protecting hand alone wou'd raise

My drooping verdure, and extend my praise !

Peers from the distant *Samian* shore resort ; 150.

Here with *Dulichians* join'd, besiege the Court :

*Zacynthus*, green with ever-shady groves,

And *Ithaca*, presumptuous boast their loves :

Obtruding on my choice a second Lord,

They press the *Hymenæan* rite abhor'd. 155

Mis-rule thus mingling with domestick cares,

I live regardless of my state-affairs :

Receive no stranger-guest, no poor relieve ;

But ever for my Lord in secret grieve ! —

This art, instinct by some celestial pow'r, 160

I try'd, elusive of the bridal hour :

“ Ye Peers I cry, who press to gain a heart,

“ Where dead *Ulysses* claims no future part ;



230 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xix.

“ Rebate your loves, each rival suit suspend,  
“ ’Till this funereal web my labours end : . 165  
“ Cease, ’till to good *Laertes* I bequeath  
“ A-pall of state, the ornament of death.  
“ For when to Fate he bows, each *Grecian*  
dame  
“ With just reproach were licens’d to defame ;  
“ Should He, long honour’d in supreme com-  
mand, 170  
“ Want the last duties of a daughter’s hand.”  
**T**he fiction pleas’d ! their loves I long elude ;  
**T**he night still ravell’d, what the day renew’d,  
**T**hree years successful in my art conceal’d,  
My ineffectual fraud the fourth reveal’d : 175  
Befriended by my own domestick spies,  
**T**he woof unwrought the Suitor-train surprise.  
**F**rom nuptial rites they now no more recede,  
**A**nd fear forbids to falsify the breed.  
My anxious parents urge a speedy choice, 180  
**A**nd to their suffrage gain the filial voice :  
**F**or Rule mature, *Telemachus* deplores  
**H**is dome dishonour’d, and exhausted stores —



## BOOK XIX. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 231.

But stranger ! as thy days seem full of fate,  
Divide discourse, in turn thy birth relate : 185  
Thy Port asserts thee of distinguish'd race :  
No poor un-father'd product of disgrace.

Princess ! he cries, renew'd by your command,  
The dear remembrance of my native land,  
Of secret grief unseals the fruitful source ; 190  
And tears repeat their long-forgotten course !  
So pays the wretch, whom fate constrains to  
roam,

The dues of nature to his natal home ! —  
But inward on my soul let sorrow prey ;  
Your sov'reign Will my duty bids obey. 195

*Crete* awes the circling waves, a fruitful soil !  
And ninety cities crown the sea-born Isle :

[*v. 196, &c. Crete* —] It is not without a good reason that *Ulysses* is so particular in the Geography of *Crete* ; he does it, that *Penelope* from the knowledge of the truth which he speaks concerning that Island, may be induced to give the readier credit to his succeeding fictions. In the *Iliad*, *Homer* calls *Crete* *κατόμηπολις*, or the Island with an hundred cities, *lib. ii.*

*Crete's* hundred cities pour forth all her sons.

Here he affirms it to have no more than ninety. *Strabo* is very full upon this difficulty, *lib. x.* *Ephorus* (says that Author) judges that ten cities were built by the *Dorians* after



## 232 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xix.

Mix'd with her genuine sons, adopted names  
In various tongues avow their various claims :

the *Trojan war*, under *Althæmenes*; and therefore *Ulysses* here mentions *Crete* as having only ninety: but this opinion carries no probability. Others affirm, that ten cities were demolished by the enemies of *Idomeneus*; but this is no more than a conjecture: the truth is, *Homer* does not affirm that there were an hundred cities in the time of the war with *Troy*, but in his own age; (for the Poet in that place speaks in his own person) if he had put the words into the mouth of any one who had lived in the time of the war, he would not have called it the Isle of the hundred, but ninety cities, according to this description of *Ulysses*; it being very improbable, that ten of the *Cretan* cities should be destroyed, either during the war, or after the return of *Idomeneus*; for *Homer* himself testifies that he returned safe to *Crete* with all his soldiers, *lib. iii.* of the *Odyssy*.

And those whom *Idomen* from *Ilion*'s plain  
Had led, securely crost the dreadful main.

And therefore he had sufficient forces to defend his country: but though we allow that those ten cities had been destroyed after his return, yet how could *Ulysses* come to the knowledge of it, having neither been in *Crete*, nor met with any *Cretan* to inform him in all his voyages? It is therefore probable that in the time of the *Trojan war* *Crete* had no more than ninety cities, but an hundred in the days of *Homer*: and this fully reconciles the *Iliad* with the *Odyssy*; in the *Odyssy* it is *Ulysses* that speaks, in the *Iliad*, *Homer*.

*Virgil* speaks of *Crete* after the manner of *Homer*.

“ *Creta Jovis magni medio jacet insula ponto,*  
“ *Centum urbes habitant magnas, uberrima regna.*”

The other ten cities were built by the *Dorians* (as *Ephorus* writes) under *Althæmenes*.

\*. 199. *In various tongues ———]* The meaning of this is, that the natural inhabitants of *Crete* were mixed with strangers



## BOOK XIX. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 233

*Cydonians* dreadful with the bended yew, 200  
And bold *Pelasgi* boast a native's due :  
*The Dorians*, plum'd amid the files of war,  
Her foodful glebe with fierce *Achaeans* share ;  
*Cnossus*, her capital of high command ;  
Where scepter'd *Minos* with impartial hand 205

who had settled in the Island ; or as some imagine (says *Eustathius*) *Ulysses* speaks thus out of fear, lest *Penelope* should discover him not to be a native of *Crete* from his wrong pronunciation of the language of the *Cretans*. We may gather from *Strabo*, that the *Dorians* inhabited the eastern parts, the *Cydonians* the western, the *Eteo-Cretans* the southern, and the rest of the nation being most powerful, possess the plain country lying toward the north : the *Eteo-Cretans*, that is, the true *Cretans*, were the original inhabitants of the Island, and probably also the *Cydonians*. There is some difficulty in the word τριχάῖτες. *Andron* the Historian (continues *Strabo*) affirms, that the *Dorians* who lived near *Parnassus* planted a colony in *Crete*, and built three cities, and from thence called themselves τριχάῖτες, *quasi tripartiti*. But *Strabo* rejects this opinion of *Andron*, for these *Dorians* possess four cities, and their country was called τίκαπολις; he therefore believes them to have taken that name from a triple crest, or from having them adorned with hair after the manner of a plumage, from τρίχη signifying hair. But perhaps *Strabo* is in a mistake, for *Thucydides*, lib. i. p. 107. and *Diodorus*, lib. xi. p. 60. confirm the opinion of *Andron*. The words of *Strabo* have given great trouble to the Commentators, and they ingenuously confess they cannot understand them. The expression is τριχίτες λόφοις ἴφαμίλαις: the difficulty lies in ἴφαμίλαις; but if we read the sentence thus, all will be plain, τριχίτες λόφοις, ἵ ἴφαμίλαις, that is, crests adorned with hair, or something like it, from ἴφαμαλος, *aequalis*. *Dacier*.



## 234 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xix.

Divided Right ; each ninth revolving year,  
By Jove receiv'd in council to confer.

¶. 206. —— *Each ninth revolving year, &c.]* This *Minos* King of *Crete* was an excellent lawgiver ; and as *Ephorus* writes, (says *Strabo*) to give his laws the greater veneration he used to descend into a cave sacred to *Jupiter*, and pretend that he had there received them from the mouth of that Deity ; this is the reason why *Homer* tells us he conversed with *Jupiter*. Thus also *Numa Pompilius* boasted of the same favour from *Aegeria*, to make his decrees to be received by the *Romans*. The only difficulty is in the word ἐννέαετος ; and it has been generally believed to imply, that *Minos* continued in the cave of *Jupiter* nine whole years : but *Casaubon* remarks that it never signifies nine years, but every ninth year ; as τριῶν does not mean three days, but the third day ; and this agrees exactly with the History of *Minos*, (see *Valerius Maximus*, lib. i. cap. 2.) who was accustomed to review and rectify all his laws every ninth year. *Plato* quotes this passage in his piece, entitled *Minos*, and puts this last observation beyond all dispute : “ *Homer* tells us (says that Author) that *Minos* conversed with *Jupiter* every ninth year ; ἐνάτῳ έτει, and went to be instructed by him as a scholar by a master ;” and a little lower he adds, ἐφοίτα δι' ἐνάτῳ έτεις εἰ ; ἀνέγον διὸς ὁ *Minos*, &c. that is, “ he went into the cave of *Jupiter*, to learn new laws, or to reform the old which he had received in the former period,” τῇ ὠργολέξῃ ἐννέαετος. This *Minos* was the most just of all mankind, and for this reason was supposed to be made one of the infernal judges. *Plutarch* in the life of *Demetrius* makes a fine remark upon this description of *Minos* ; “ *Homer* (says he) has not honoured with the glorious title of the Disciple of *Jupiter*, the greatest warriour or oppressor, or a renowned tyrant ; but the man famous for his justice and probity, a legislator, and a benefactor to mankind. *Dacier*.

¶. 207. *By Jove receiv'd in council to confer.]* The word in the Greek is ὁμηρίας, and *Plato* fully explains it in his *Minos* ;



BOOK XIX. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 235

His son *Deucalion* bore successive sway ;  
His son, who gave me first to view the day !  
The royal bed an elder issue blest, 210  
*Idomeneus*, whom *Ilian* fields attest  
Of matchless deed : untrain'd to martial toil  
I liv'd inglorious in my native Isle,  
Studiois of peace ; and *Aethon* is my name.  
'Twas then to *Crete* the great *Ulysses* came ; 215

ὅρος is the discourse, ὁρεῖνς thè person who discourses ; ὁ συμπο-  
αστὴς ἐν λόγοις : others (continues *Plato*) understand it to signify  
the guest of *Jupiter*, συμπότην, συμπαισῆν, a person that was ad-  
mitted to the table of *Jupiter*, or a partaker in his diversions ;  
but the falsity of this opinion (adds he) will sufficiently appear,  
if we remember, that of all the *Greeks*, the *Cretans* and *Lace-  
demonians*, who learned it from them, alone abstain from com-  
putations, and diversions arising from them ; and in particular  
this is one of the laws of *Minos* enacted in *Crete*, μὴ συμπίνειν αλ-  
λήλους•εἰς μεῖνην, commanding the *Cretans* not to drink in their  
entertainments to excess. Thus far *Dacier*; to which I shall add  
that this remark of *Plato* may perhaps contribute greatly to the  
glory of *Minos*, but gives little honour to *Jupiter* ; it insinuates  
that a person who drinks with that Deity, might endanger  
his sobriety ; otherwise to be admitted to the table of *Jupiter*  
is an instance of favour and familiarity, and would have been  
an honour to *Minos*. *Horace* is of this opinion, for speaking  
of *Tantalus*, lib. i. *Carm.* he mentions it as a peculiar testi-  
mony of favour ;

“ Occidit & Pelopis genitor, conviva deorum.”

That is, according to *Homer's* expression, δῶς συμποικῆς or  
συμπότης.



236 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book xix.

For elemental war, and wint'ry Jove,  
From *Malea*'s gusty cape his navy drove  
**To** bright *Lucina*'s fane ; the shelfy coast  
Where loud *Amnissus* in the deep is lost.  
His vessels moor'd; (an incommodious port !) 220  
The Hero speeded to the *Cnossian* court :  
Ardent the partner of his arms to find ;  
In leagues of long commutual friendship join'd.  
Vain hope ! ten suns had warm'd the western strand,  
Since my brave brother with his *Cretan* band 225  
Had fail'd for *Troy* : but to the genial feast  
My honour'd roof receiv'd the royal guest :  
Beeves for his train the *Cnossian* Peers assign,  
A publick treat, with jars of gen'rous wine.

\*. 218. *To* bright *Lucina*'s fane ] Strabo informs us that upon the *Amnissus* there is a cave sacred to *Ilithya*, or *Lucina*, who presides over child-birth. The reason given by Eustathius why the Poet places the cave by that river is too frivolous to be recited : it is probable that it was called the cave of *Ilithya*, because some great Lady had made use of it, upon an occasion in which women invoke the assistance of that Goddess ; or perhaps because water is one of the great principles of generation, the temple of *Lucina* could not be placed in a more proper situation, than upon the banks of a river, and close by the sea. Dacier.

\*. 228. Beeves for his train the *Cnossian* Peers assign,  
A publick treat — ]



## BOOK XIX. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 237

Twelve days, while *Boreas* vex'd th' aerial space,  
My hospitable dome he deign'd to grace: 231  
And when the north had ceas'd the stormy roar,  
He wing'd his voyage to the *Pbrygian* shore.

Thus the fam'd Hero, perfected in wiles,  
With fair similitude of truth beguiles 235

It was not to be expected, and indeed it was almost impossible that one person should entertain *Ulysses* and his whole fleet, which consisted of twelve vessels. This passage therefore gives us a remarkable custom of Antiquity, which was, that when any person with too great a number of attendants arrived in other countries, the Prince received the chief personage and his particular friends, and the rest were entertained at the publick expence.. *Dacier.*

¶. 235. *With fair similitude of truth beguiles.*] The word in the Greek is *τοξεύειν*, which has been usually interpreted to be the same with *πλέγματα*, but those that speak with more exactness derive it from *τοξεύειν*, *εἰκάζειν*, *ἀπεικονίζειν* τοξός *αἰλῆθεια*, that is, he accommodated and adapted his fictions to probability or truth; and *Hesychius* explains the same word by *εἰκάζω*, *ὅμοιω*: *Horace* almost literally translates this verse.

“ Atque ita mentitur, sic veris falsa remiscet,  
“ Primo ne medium medio ne discrepat imum.”

And indeed in this line the whole art of an Epick Poem is comprehended, which is a mixture of truths and fictions, but fictions conformable to verity; or to speak in the language of a Critick, the fable of the Epick Poem should be both probable and marvellous; astonishing, yet credible; if it be only credible, it differs in nothing from History; if only marvellous, it is no better than a Romance. The great secret therefore of an Epick Writer is to produce in the Reader's mind at the same time both belief and astonishment; and this is here performed by *Ulysses*.

*Dacier sur l' Aristotle.*



## 238 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xix.

The Queen's attentive ear : dissolv'd in woe,  
From her bright eyes the tears unbounded  
flow.

As snows collected on the mountain freeze ;  
When milder regions breathe a vernal breeze,

\*. 238. *As snows collected, &c.*] It is not easy to take the point of this simile: Mons. *Perault* grievously mistakes it: “The description (says he) which *Homer* gives us of the sorrow of *Penelope* is very unaccountable; her body *melted* like snow upon an high mountain, when the east wind *melts* it, and the snow thus *melted* fills the rivers; thus it was that the fair cheeks of *Penelope melted*.” This, says *Perault*, is translated word for word. But in reality it resembles *Homer* in nothing but the repetition of the word *melted*, or τίκελο, which in modern languages is burthensome to the ear, but not in the Greek; for the word differs from itself according to its different formation, almost as much as a new one, and gives a distant sound; for instance, τίκελο, τίκημένης, πατέτηξεν: whereas there is almost an identity of sound in *melt*, *melted*, or *melting*; or in the French, *liquifie*, *liquifiée*, *liquifioient*. Neither has *Perault* entered into the sense of the comparison: τίκελο χρώς is only a figurative hyperbole, as when we say a person is *consumed* or *wasted* with grief; or perhaps τίκω signifies no more than *burnecto*, as τακεξός *humidus*. In reality it is the quantity of tears that is intended to be represented, and the simile is thus to be understood: the snows heaped up on the mountains by the cold west wind, are the sorrows accumulated in the soul of *Penelope*; the warm eastern wind, which dissolves those snows, is the recital of *Ulysses*, which melts those sorrows into tears, and makes them flow. When *Agamemnon* weeps, in the ninth of the *Iliad*, his tears are compared to a fountain of water falling from a rock; but women being more profuse of tears, those of *Penelope* are here compared to a river.



## BOOK XIX. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 239

The fleecy pile obeys the whisp'ring gales, 240  
Ends in a stream, and murmurs thro' the vales :  
So, melted with the pleasing tale he told,  
Down her fair cheek the copious torrent roll'd :  
She to her present Lord laments him lost,  
And views that object which she wants the most !  
With'ring at heart to see the weeping Fair, 246  
His eyes look stern, and cast a gloomy stare ;

¶. 244. *She to her present Lord laments him lost.*] *Dacier* observes that this is added by *Homer* not for our information, for we already know it; but because it is a reflection which must necessarily occur to every Reader: it is a thing extraordinary to lament a person present, as if he were absolutely lost; and we reap a double satisfaction from the relation, by observing the behaviour of *Penelope* towards *Ulysses*, and of *Ulysses* towards *Penelope*; while he is at the same time, in one sense both absent and present.

¶. 247. *His eyes look stern, and cast a gloomy stare.*] There is a beautiful contrast between *Ulysses* and *Penelope*; *Penelope* indulges her passion for *Ulysses*; *Ulysses* restrains his for *Penelope*: the picture of *Ulysses* is drawn to the life, he is assaulted at once with several passions, astonishment and admiration on the one side, and compassion and a desire to comfort *Penelope* on the other; these passions being in an equal balance, and exerting an equal force, he remains fixed, like a wave driven by contrary winds, and yields to neither of their impulses; it is thus *Ulysses* continues in a steady admiration, as if he had lost all thought. This passage is too beautiful not to have been explained by the Antients; *Plutarch* quotes it as an instance of the command a wise man ought to have over his passions. “ *Ulysses*, who was the most eloquent, yet was the most silent of men, all his faculties were obedient, and subject to reason,



240 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xix.

Of horn, the stiff relentless balls appear,  
Or globes of iron fix'd in either sphere ; }  
Firm wisdom interdicts the soft'ning tear. 250 ]  
A speechless interval of grief ensues,  
'Till thus the Queen the tender theme renews.

Stranger ! that ere thy hospitable roof  
*Ulysses* grac'd, confirm by faithful proof :  
Delineate to my view my warlike Lord, 255  
His form, his habit, and his train record.

" he commanded his eye not to weep, his tongue not to speak, and his very heart not to pant or tremble : his reason influenced even his inward motions, and subdued the very blood and vital spirit." And in his treatise of Moral Virtues, he again quotes these verses ; " *Ulysses* had compleatly subjected all his faculties to right reason, and he held even his spirits, his blood, and his tears under the government of his judgment." *Virgil* paints *Dido* in the internal shades almost in the same colours with *Ulysses* :

" Illa solo fixos oculos aversa tenebat,  
" Nec magis incepto vultum sermone movetur  
" Quam si dura filex, aut stet Marpesia cautes."

\*. 248. *Of horn the stiff relentless ball's appear.] Eustathius informs us, that Homer applied this image of horny, or κερατόειδες, to the eye, because one of the coats of it is said to be of an horny substance ; but this is merely fanciful : if another tunick of the eye had been steely, there might have been some ground for the allusion ; for Homer joins both of them in the illustration, and only meant to represent the stedfastness of the eye of Ulysses, in this affecting interview.*



'Tis hard, he cries, to bring to sudden sight  
Ideas that have wing'd their distant flight :  
Rare on the mind those images are trac'd,  
Whose footsteps twenty winters have defac'd :  
But what I can, receive.—In ample mode, 261  
A robe of military purple flow'd

[v. 262, &c. *A robe of military purple, &c.*] This is a remarkable passage, and gives us an exact description of the habit of a King in the days of *Homer*, or perhaps still earlier in the days of *Ulysses*. Purple seems antiently to have been appropriated to Kings, and to them on whom they bestowed it ; thus *Judges* viii. 26. the sacred Historian mentions purple raiment that was on the Kings of *Midian*. Thus *Esther* viii. 15. a garment of fine linen and purple is given to a favourite by King *Abasuerus* ; and i *Maccabees* xliii. the *Jews* made a decree, that *Simon* should wear purple and gold, and that none of the people should wear purple or a buckle of gold without his permission, in token that he was the chief magistrate of the *Jews* ; thus also *Mac.* x. 89. *Alexander* sent *Jonathan* a buckle of gold, as the use is to be given to such as are of the King's blood. *Ulysses* is here drest much after the same manner ; he wears purple, and a buckle or clasp of gold, as a sign of his regality. But what I would chiefly observe is, that the art of embroidery was known in those early ages, nay perhaps was in greater perfection than at this day ; the embroidery was of divers colours, as we may gather from the epithet applied to the fawn, *ποικίλον*. Some persons indeed tell us, that this was interwoven into the cloth, and was made in the loom, but the words of *Homer* will admit of the other interpretation, and it is evident that embroidery was known amongst the Orientals in the age of *Ulysses*, from *Judges*, v. 30. *Have they not sped? have they not divided the prey, to Sisera a prey of*



242 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xix.

O'er all his frame: illustrious on his breast,  
The double clasping gold the King confest. 264  
In the rich woof a hound, Mosaick-drawn,  
Bore on full stretch; and seiz'd a dapp'l'd fawn:  
Deep in the neck his fangs indent their hold ;  
They pant, and struggle in the moving gold.  
Fine as a filmy web beneath it shone  
A vest, that dazzl'd like a cloudless sun : 270  
The female train who round him throng'd to  
gaze,

In silent wonder sigh'd unwilling praise.

A sabre, when the warriour press'd to part,  
I gave, enamel'd with *Vulcanian* art :  
A mantle purple-ting'd, and radiant vest, 275 }  
Dimension'd equal to his size, exprest }  
Affection grateful to my honour'd guest.

*divers colours, a prey of divers colours of needle-work, of divers colours of needle-work on both sides, meet for the necks of them that take the spoil?* Here is evidently mention made of embroidery; and perhaps such was this robe of *Ulysses*; but however this be, it is manifest that all manner of creatures were figured upon the habit of great personages, and that those creatures were in-wrought so naturally as to seem to be alive.

s. 275. — — — radiant vest,  
Dimension'd equal to his size — — ]



BOOK XIX. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 243

A fav'rite herald in his train I knew,  
His visage solemn sad, of fable hue :  
Short woolly curls o'erfleec'd his bending head,  
O'er which a promontory-shoulder spread: 281  
*Eurybates!* in whose large soul alone  
*Ulysses* view'd an image of his own.

His speech the tempest of her grief restor'd,  
In all he told she recogniz'd her Lord : 285  
But when the storm was spent in plenteous  
show'r's ;  
A pause inspiring her languish'd pow'r's :  
O thou, she cry'd, whom first inclement fate  
Made welcome to my hospitable gate ; 289

It may be asked what is the meaning of the τερπίσσεια χλώρα here mentioned by *Ulysses*? *Eustathius* explains it by στιμφελός, that is, neither too long nor too short, too wide or too scanty, but exactly corresponding to the make of the body. *Hesiod* uses the same word in the same sense; and *Hesychius* interprets it in the same manner, Εὐμέλος, καὶ μέχρι τῶν ποδῶν τερπίσσειαν. *Dacier.*

¶. 278. A fav'rite herald — —] This is very artful in *Ulysses*: *Penelope* had asked what kind of person her husband was; *Ulysses* fears to give a description of himself, lest by drawing the copy like the original now before the eyes of *Penelope*, she should discover him to be *Ulysses*: he therefore diverts the enquiry, yet at the same time satisfies her curiosity, by adding a new circumstance to confirm his veracity by describing his attendant and Herald *Eurybates*. *Dacier.*



244 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xix.

With all thy wants the name of poor shall end ;  
Henceforth live honour'd, my domestick friend !  
The vest much envy'd on your native coast,  
And regal robe with figur'd gold embost,  
In happier hours my artful hand employ'd,  
When my lov'd Lord this blissful bow'r en-  
joy'd :

295

The fall of *Troy* erroneous and forlorn  
Doom'd to survive, and never to return !

Then he, with pity touch'd : O Royal Dame ! }  
Your ever-anxious mind, and beauteous frame, }  
From the devouring rage of grief reclaim. 300 }  
I not the fondness of your soul reprove  
For such a Lord ! who crown'd your virgin-love  
With the dear blessing of a fair increase ;  
Himself adorn'd with more than mortal grace :  
Yet while I speak, the mighty woe suspend ; 305  
Truth forms my tale ; to pleasing truth attend.  
The royal object of your dearest care,  
Breathes in no distant clime the vital air :  
In rich *Thesprotia*, and the nearer bound  
Of *Thessaly*, his name I heard renown'd : 310



BOOK XIX. HOMER's ODYSSEY. 245

Without retinue, to that friendly shore  
Welcom'd with gifts of price, a sumless store !  
His sacrilegious train, who dar'd to prey  
On herds devoted to the God of day,  
Were doom'd by *Jove*, and *Pbæbus'* just decree,  
To perish in the rough *Trinacrian* sea. 316

To better fate the blameless Chief ordain'd,  
A floating fragment of the wreck regain'd,  
And rode the storm ; 'till by the billows tost,  
He landed on the fair *Pbæcian* coast. 320

That race who emulate the life of Gods,  
Receive him joyous to their blest abodes :  
Large gifts confer, a ready sail command,  
To speed his voyage to the *Grecian* strand.  
But your wise Lord, (in whose capacious soul 325  
High schemes of pow'r in just succession roll)  
His *Ithaca* refus'd from fav'ring Fate,  
'Till copious wealth might guard his regal state.

\*. 327. *His Ithaca refus'd from fav'ring Fate,*  
*'Till copious wealth might guard his regal state.]*

*Ulysses* amassed great riches by being driven from country to country : every Prince where he arrived made him great presents, according to the laudable customs of hospitality in former ages. The word in the *Greek* (observes *Dacier*) is ἀγρίπλαξις, it



246 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xix.

*Pbedon* the fact affirm'd, whose sov'reign sway  
*Tbeffrotian* tribes, a duteous race, obey : 330  
And bade the Gods this added truth attest,  
(While pure libations crown'd the genial feast)  
That anchor'd in his port the vessels stand,  
To waft the Hero to his natal land.

I for *Dulichium* urge the wat'ry way, 335  
But first the *Ulyssean* wealth survey :  
So rich the value of a store so vast  
Demands the pomp of centuries to waste !  
The darling object of your royal love,  
Was journey'd thence to *Dodonean Jove*; 340

is borrowed from beggars, who by strolling from place to place get their livelihood ; and hence it was made use of simply for to amass, or make collections. *Hesychius* explains it by συλλέγειν, πολίζειν, ἔγειται : in which words there are two errors, and it is manifest they are corrupted ; Monsieur *le Feuvre* reads αἴωχθαι, ἀγεῖσθαι. *Dacier*.

We may observe that *Ulysses* gives himself great commendations through this whole interview ; he calls himself δός Οδυσσεὺς, and says, that there were few men in the world like him ; that he was θεοῖς ἴμαλικος, or like the Gods : this is not a sign of vanity or ostentation, since *Ulysses* speaks in the character of a stranger : he must therefore speak in the same manner as a stranger would have spoke ; that is, with honour of *Ulysses*, to ingratiate himself with *Penelope*. Besides, this conduct conduces to persuade *Penelope*, that he is the person he pretends to be, and by the consequence contributes to prevent a discovery.



BOOK XIX. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 247

By the sure precept of the silvan shrine,  
To form the conduct of his great design :  
Irresolute of soul, his state to shrowd  
In dark disguise, or come, a King avow'd ?  
Thus lives your Lord ; nor longer doom'd to  
roam :

345

Soon will he grace this dear paternal dome.  
By Jove, the source of good, supreme in pow'r !  
By the blest genius of this friendly bow'r !  
I ratify my speech ; before the sun  
His annual longitude of heav'n shall run ; 350  
When the pale Empress of yon' starry train  
In the next month renews her faded wane,  
*Ulysses* will assert his rightful reign. ]

What thanks ! what boon ! reply'd the Queen,  
are due,  
When time shall prove the storied blessing  
true : 355

My Lord's return shou'd fate no more retard,  
Envy shall sicken at thy vast reward.  
But my prophetick fears, alas ! presage,  
The wounds of Destiny's relentless rage.



248 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xix.

I long must weep ! nor will *Ulysses* come, 360  
With royal gifts to send you honour'd home!—  
Your other task, ye menial train, forbear :  
Now wash the stranger, and the bed prepare ;  
With splendid palls the downy fleece adorn :  
Up-rising early with the purple morn, 365

\*. 363. *Now wash the stranger, &c.*] This was one of the first rites of hospitality observed towards strangers, amongst the Antients ; the Scriptures abound with instances of it : *Abraham* offers water to wash the feet of the Angels whom he mistook for strangers, &c. There was also a bath for the stranger, but this seems to have been a greater honour (as *Dacier* observes) than that of washing the feet ; this may be gathered from the manner in which it was performed ; the daughters of the family, even young Princesses, assisted at the bath ; but the washing the feet was an office committed to servants : thus the daughter of *Nestor*, in the third *Odysssey*, bathed *Tellemachus*, but *Ulysses* being disguised like a beggar, *Euryklea* washes his feet. This agrees exactly with another passage of scripture ; when *David* sent to ask *Abigail* to wife, 1 Sam. xxv. 41. she made answer, *Let thine handmaid be a servant to wash the feet of the servants of my Lord.* My memory fails me, if there be any other passage, either in the *Iliad* or *Odysssey*, where this practice of washing the feet is directly mentioned ; the reason is, this was an office performed only to inferiour persons ; the bath was for Heroes and Kings. Now both *Homer's* Poems are filled with the characters of such personages, and therefore there was no room to mention it in other places : it is true, the word here is *ἀποιτάει*, and does not necessarily imply the washing of the feet, but washing in general : yet here it is to be understood of the feet, for *Euryklea* in the act of washing them discovers this stranger to be *Ulysses*.



BOOK XIX. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 249

His sinews shrunk with age, and stiff with toil,  
In the warm bath foment with fragrant oil.  
Then with *Telemachus* the social feast  
Partaking free, my sole invited guest ;  
Whoever neglects to pay distinction due, 370  
The breach of hospitable right may rue.  
The vulgar of my sex I most exceed  
In real fame, when most humane my deed :  
And vainly to the praise of Queen aspire,  
If, stranger ! I permit that mean attire, 375  
Beneath the feastful bow'r. A narrow space ]  
Confines the circle of our destin'd race ; }  
'Tis ours, with good the scanty round to grace. ]  
Those who to cruel wrong their state abuse,  
Dreaded in life, the mutter'd curse pursues ; 380

\*. 376. — — *A narrow space*  
*Confines the circle of our destin'd race.]*

The sense is here cut short, and *Homer*, like a good Painter, leaves something to be supplied by the Reader's imagination. Life is short (*says Penelope*) we ought therefore to employ it in doing good. The motive indeed which she uses, is not entirely conformable to true Theology ; she here proposes glory as the sole aim of doing virtuous actions ; though in other places *Homer* plainly asserts, that we ought to act with piety to please the Gods. *Dacier.*



250 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xix.

By death dis-rob'd of all their savage pow'rs,  
Then, licens'd rage her hateful prey devours.  
But he whose in-born worth his acts commend,  
Of gentle soul, to human race a friend ;  
The wretched he relieves diffuse his fame, 385  
And distant tongues extol the patron-name.

Princess, he cry'd, in vain your bounties flow  
On me, confirm'd, and obstinate in woe,  
When my lov'd *Crete* receiv'd my final view,  
And from my weeping eyes her cliffs withdrew ; 390

These tatter'd weeds (my decent robe resign'd)  
I chose, the livery of a woful mind !  
Nor will my heart-corroding cares abate  
With splendid palls, and canopies of state :  
Low-couch'd on earth, the gift of sleep I scorn,  
And catch the glances of the waking morn. 396  
The delicacy of your courtly train  
To wash a wretched wand'rer wou'd disdain ;  
But if, in track of long experience try'd,  
And sad similitude of woes ally'd, 400

\*. 399. *But if, in track of long experience, &c.]* I will have  
an old woman to wash me (*says Ulysses*). The reasoun of this



Some wretch reluctant views aerial light,  
To her mean hand assign the friendly rite.

request is not evident at first view; but *Eustathius* explains it by shewing that *Ulysses* acts thus to avoid the insults and contempt of the younger damsels of *Penelope*, who had sufficiently outraged him in this and the preceding book; they would think themselves degraded by performing such an office to a beggar. *Eustathius* remarks, that some antient Criticks rejected three verses here: it is absurd, say they, that *Ulysses* should chuse *Euryklea* for this office, who was the only person who could discover him, and ruin his designs; he knew she was acquainted with the wound that afterwards discovers him: but the truth is, *Ulysses* knew *Euryklea* to be a person of wisdom, and he was in hopes to draw her over to his interest, and make use of her in his affairs in the future parts of the *Odyssey*; and this he does upon many important occasions, in particular in locking up the Palace at the time of the battle between him and the Suitors; so that by her means he prevents the report of that great incident from being carried to their partizans abroad: here therefore he artfully brings it about, that *Euryklea* should be assigned to this office, not only to avoid the insults of the other females, but to make use of her faithfulness and wisdom to carry on his designs, and make the way more easy to the Suitors Destruction. The choice therefore was prudent; she was aged, and acquainted with human miseries, not only by reason of her age, but had herself suffered in all the afflictions of *Penelope* and *Tel'machus*; we find she is described as a mother to the whole family, and she all along adopts the afflictions of it: *Eustathius* therefore may perhaps be mistaken when he asserts this to be an instance of ill counsels crowned with good success. But then it may be asked, if *Euryklea* was a person of such wisdom and fidelity, why does not *Ulysses* trust her with the secret of his return? The reason is plain, it would not only have been contrary to his cautious nature, but a breach of all decency to trust himself to *Euryklea*, and not to *Penelope*; this would in some mea-



252 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xix.

Pleas'd with his wife reply, the Queen rejoin'd :  
Such gentle manners, and so sage a mind,  
In all who grac'd this hospitable bow'r                  405  
I ne'er discern'd, before this social hour.

Such servant as your humble choice requires,  
To light receiv'd the Lord of my desires,  
New from the birth : and with a mother's hand  
His tender bloom to manly growth sustain'd: 410  
**Of** matchless prudence, and a duteous mind; }  
**Tho'** now to life's extremest verge declin'd,  
**Of** strength superiour to the toil assign'd.— }

Rise, *Euryklea* ! with officious care  
For the poor friend the cleansing bath pre-  
pare :    415

This debt his correspondent fortunes claim,  
Too like *Ulysses*, and perhaps the same !  
Thus, old with woes my fancy paints him now !  
For age untimely marks the careful brow.

Instant obsequious to the mild command, 420  
Sad *Euryklea* rose : with trembling hand

sure have raised the character of the servant above that of his wife and Queen. Part of this note I am indebted for to M. *Dacier*.



She veils the torrent of her tearful eyes ;  
And thus impassion'd to herself replies.

¶. 422. *She veils the torrent of her tearful eyes.*] Dacier observes that Aristotle in his third book of Rhetorick quotes this action of Euryclea as an instance of a *Paralogism* familiar to Homer; and again in his Poeticks he cites it to the same purpose: a Paralogism consists in making use of false reasoning, and drawing a false consequence from true premisses : “ All men, says Aristotle, are naturally persuaded that where such a thing is, or is done, such another must happen ; we may therefore make them easily believe that if the last is, the first must consequently be ; but in reality, the latter which we lay down as truth being often false, the former is so more frequently, for it does not follow, that because one thing is, another must necessarily be ; but because we are persuaded of the truth of the latter, we conclude fairly, that the former is also true.” The Reader will enter into the meaning of Aristotle, and understand what a Paralogism is, by an example of it ; for instance, if we were to prove a man to be in love, we bring it as an argument that he is pale : now this is a false reasoning or paralogism, because a person may be pale from other reasons than love. Thus in the instance of Euryclea “ Homer (says Aristotle) imposes upon his Reader, by mentioning a sign that is known, to draw a consequence from it, to prove a thing that is not known ;” that is, Homer endeavours to prove that the whole story concerning Euryclea is true, and that she really hid her eyes when she wept, because this is a consequence of passion, and because it is natural for persons to conceal their eyes with their hands while they weep. This also is a Paralogism, for every syllable concerning Euryclea may be a fiction of the Poet, though such a gesture is natural to a person in her circumstances ; the imposition consists in this, namely, in the art of the Poet, in endeavouring to deceive us into a belief, that because persons when they weep conceal their eyes, therefore it is true that Euryclea thus actually wept ; the latter may be evidently false, though the former may be true ; Aristotle brings this



Son of my love, and Monarch of my cares !  
What pangs for thee this wretched bosom bears !  
Are thus by *Jove* who constant beg his aid 426  
With pious deed, and pure devotion, paid ?  
He never dar'd defraud the sacred fane,  
Of perfect Hecatombs in order slain :  
There oft' implor'd his tutelary pow'r, 430  
Long to protract the sad sepulchral hour ;  
That form'd for empire with paternal care,  
His realm might recognize an equal heir.  
O destin'd head ! The pious vows are lost ;  
His God forgets him on a foreign coast !— 435  
practice of *Homer* as an example to all Poets how to tell lies  
as they ought, or agreeably.

¶. 434. — — *The pious vows are lost ;*  
*His God forgets him — — ]*

*Euryclæ* we see is astonished to find that a person who is remarkable for his piety should be unfortunate ; the age was not enlightened enough to know that calamity is often a proof of virtue, and a trial, not a punishment. *Maximus Tyrius*, the *Platonick*, xxii *Dissert.* excellently explains this subject : “ Who (says that Author) can deny *Ulysses* to be a man “ of piety ? *Jupiter* remembers him, *Minerva* loves him, “ *Mercury* guides him, *Calypso* is enamoured with him, and “ *Leucothea* saves his life ! Who then can deny but that *Heaven* tried him with all his afflictions, that he might appear “ to be, and deserve to be called a good man ? this is the “ reason why he suffered at *Troy*, from the Suitors, by the “ *Cyclops*, by *Circe*, and by Shipwreck ; this is the reason “ why he wandered as a vagabond, and a beggar, that he



BOOK XIX. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 255

Perhaps, like thee, poor guest ! in wanton  
pride

The rich insult him, and the young deride ;  
Conscious of worth revil'd, thy gen'rous mind  
The friendly rite of purity declin'd ;  
My will concurring with my Queen's com-  
mand,

440

Accept the bath from this obsequious hand.  
A strong emotion shakes my anguish'd breast ;  
In thy whole form *Ulysses* seems express :  
Of all the wretched harboar'd on our coast,  
None imag'd e'er like thee my master loft. 445

" was half naked, that he was struck and insulted, and suf-  
" fered a thousand insolencies from the riots of the Suitors : it  
" was the favour and love of Heaven that brought him into  
" all these afflictions, and not the anger of *Neptune*." When  
a good man suffers, Heaven frequently chuses him out as an  
Hero, who knows how to behave bravely in the day of ad-  
versity ; and this is agreeable to true Theology.

¶. 443. *In thy whole form Ulysses seems express, &c.*] Homer  
continually draws his reflections from the present object :  
*Penelope*, at the sight of this distressed and ill-cloathed stranger,  
breaks out into a tender sentiment, and cries, " Perhaps my  
" *Ulysses* is such as he !" for thus *Eustathius* applies the ex-  
pression, ἐ τοὺς οὐ πάντα διὰ κάκων ; that is, " he was  
" not such by nature, but misfortune :" but if we understand  
it of a bodily resemblance, the sentiment is still beautiful, and  
the Reader cannot without pleasure see *Penelope* deceived in  
comparing *Ulysses* with *Ulysses*. *Dacier.*



256 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xix.

Thus half discover'd thro' the dark disguise,  
With cool composure feign'd, the Chief replies :  
You join your suffrage to the publick vote ;  
The same you think, have all beholders thought.

He said : replenish'd from the purest springs,  
The laver straight with busy care she brings : 451  
In the deep vase, that shone like burnish'd gold,  
The boiling fluid temperates the cold.

Meantime revolving in his thoughtful mind  
The scar, with which his manly knee was sign'd ;  
His face averting from the crackling blaze, 456  
His shoulders intercept th' unfriendly rays.  
Thus cautious in th' obscure he hop'd to fly  
The curious search of *Euryklea*'s eye.

y. 447. — — the Chief replies.] This is very artful in *Ulysses*: if he had denied the resemblance, it might have given suspicion ; he therefore confesses it, and by confessing it persuades *Euryklea* that he is not the real *Ulysses*. *Dacier*.

y. 456. His face averting from the crackling blaze.] The reason why *Ulysses* turns toward the darkness is to avoid discovery, and that *Euryklea* might not examine him too curiously : but this is not the whole design of *Homer* ; the Poet thus describes *Ulysses* to give probability to the future story ; for as *Eustathius* judiciously remarks, it is from this action alone that the fainting of *Euryklea*, her laying her hand on the chin of *Ulysses*, his seizure of her throat to hinder her from discovering him, escape the notice of *Penelope* ; *Ulysses* is seated out of view, and withdrawn from observation. *Dacier*.



## BOOK XIX. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 257

Cautious in vain! nor ceas'd the dame to find  
The scar, with which his manly knee was  
sign'd. 461

v. 460. *Cautious in vain! nor ceas'd the dame to find  
The scar——]*

This story concerning the wound of *Ulysses*, may, I fear, in some parts of it, seem somewhat tedious; it may therefore be necessary to shew that it is introduced with judgment; and though not intirely entertaining, yet artful.

*Aristotle* in the eighth Chap. of his *Poeticks*, speaking of the union of the action of the *Odysssey*, mentions this wound of *Ulysses*. *Homer*, says he, who excelled other Poets in all respects, seems perfectly to have known this defect, (*viz.* that all the actions of an Hero do not constitute the unity of the action, but only such as are capable to be united with the fable) for in composing his *Odysssey*, he has not mentioned all the adventures of *Ulysses*: for example, he has not joined the wound he received upon *Parnassus* with the account of his feigned madness, when the *Greeks* assembled their army; for because one of them happened, it was neither necessary nor probable that the other should also happen; but he has inserted all that could have respect to one and the same action. Monsieur *Dacier* fully explains *Aristotle*; We have in this precept (observes that Author) two remarkable events in the life of *Ulysses*, his feigned madness, and his wound received upon *Parnassus*: the Poet mentions the wound, but is silent about his madness: he saw that the latter had no connexion either in truth or probability with the subject of his Poem, and therefore he says not a word of it; he has acted otherwise with respect to the wound received upon *Parnassus*: for although that wound was no more to the matter of his Poem, than the madness, yet he speaks of it, because he found an opportunity of inserting it so naturally into his principal action, that it becomes a necessary part of it, since it causes a re-



## 258 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK XIX.

This on *Parnassus* (combating the boar)  
With glancing rage the tusky savage tore.

membrance of his Hero, that is, since it is the occasion of *Euryklea's* discovering *Ulysses*; so that this History which is here related at length is no foreign Episode, but a natural part of the subject, by being thus artfully united to it. This fully teaches us of what nature the different parts which a Poet uses to form one and the same action ought to be; namely, either necessary or probable consequences of one another, as the remembrance of *Ulysses* was of this wound: every adventure then that has not this connexion ought to be rejected as foreign, and as breaking the unity of the action: and therefore *Homer* took care not to interrupt the unity of his *Odyssy*, by the Episode of the feigned madness of *Ulysses*; or that incident could not be produced by any that were necessary or proper to the Poem, nor produce any that had the least relation to it.

*Bosse* fully agrees with *Aristotle* and *Dacier*, and gathers from this Episode that some incidents which make not directly any part of the action or the fable may be inserted into a Poem, if those incidents are necessary to clear up any part of the fable or action.

This *remembrance*, or discovery by the wound, is mentioned in another place; see the twenty-first *Odyssy*. *Aristotle* in his seventeenth *Chap.* of the *Poeticks*, prefers this remembrance to that there made to *Eumeus*: It is (observes that Author) here managed with more address and art; it is done without design, and seems a consequence of the story: there *Ulysses* himself discovers the wound: here it arises from the subject, and a series of incidents: there *Ulysses* has recourse to it, and it causes no surprise, because there is no great art in shewing a mark, which we are willing to have known. All remembrances therefore (says *Aristotle*) which produce their effects by design have little ingenuity: whereas those which are brought about by chance, surprise us, and are instances of the Poet's art and address.



Attended by his brave maternal race,  
His grandfire sent him to the silvan chace, 465  
*Autolycus* the bold : (a mighty name  
For spotless faith and deeds of martial fame :

v. 466. *Autolycus the bold : (a mighty name  
For spotless faith ——)*

This difficult passage is well explained by *Dacier* and *Eustathius* : the words are

—— ὁς ἀθρώπος ἔκειστο  
κλεψούμ 9' ὅρκῳ τε ——

which literally run thus, “ he surpassed all men in swearing “ and stealing : ” a terrible character ! if it were to be understood according to the letter : it has been imagined, that *Homer* commends *Autolycus* for his address in robbery, and making equivocal oaths ; like the person (says *Eustathius*) who made a truce with his enemies for several days, and immediately went and ravaged their territories by night, and defended it, by telling them that the truce was not made for the night but the day : or like the person mentioned by *Athenaeus*, who stole a fish, and gave it to his neighbour, and being questioned about it, swore, that he had it not himself, nor saw any other person steal it : but this is not the meaning of *Homer*, for he calls *Autolycus* ἄστος or a good man, and adds that this κλεψούμ ναι ὅρκος, was the gift of a God. The truth is, the former word does not here signify theft, nor the latter perjury : the former signifies a laudable address in concealing our own designs, and discovering those of our enemies ; it consists in surprising them, when they least expect us, in beating up their quarters, carrying off their convoys, their provisions, and in short in all manner of stratagems, authorized by the laws of war : ὅρκος signifies fidelity in observing an oath, and never violating the sanctity of it. *Plato*, in his first book *de Repub.* makes it plain, that this is the sense of *Homer* : he there quotes



## 260 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK XIX.

*Hermes* his Patron-god those gifts bestow'd,  
Whose shrine with weanling lambs he wont to  
load).

His course to *Ithaca* this Hero sped, 470

When the first product of *Laertes'* bed  
Was new disclos'd to birth ; the banquet ends, }  
When *Euryklea* from the Queen descends, }  
And to his fond embrace the babe commends. }

this passage, and asserts that he is the best guardian of an army, who knows how to steal the counsels and enterprises of the enemy, τὰ τῶν πολεμίων κλέψας βελτίουλα, καὶ τὰς ἀλλας πράξεις; from this, it is there inferred, that justice is a kind of chicanery (κλεπτικὴ τις ἐπ' ἀφελεῖσι φύλων, καὶ βλάβη τῶν οἰχθόων) by which we serve our friends, and bring detriment to our enemies; but the answer there given to this assertion is, & μὰ τὸ Διὸς, or, by no means: it must be understood with some restriction: it is lawful to deceive an enemy in war, but in common life criminal. The qualities therefore that *Homer* commends in *Autolycus*, are his dexterity in discovering, penetrating and preventing the designs of his enemies, and the religious observance of his oaths, and not theft and perjury; *Eustathius* explains *Homer* by adding κλεπτοῖς & κακοῖς, ὡραῖς & τραῦσι.

¶. 468. *Hermes his Patron-god those gifts bestow'd.]* The reason why *Homer* attributes these gifts to *Mercury* is, because he was the president of society, or of all things that are acted with a desire of concealment. He is also the God of speech, it therefore appertained to that Deity to guard the verity of it, in particular of oaths, being the president of speaking.  
*Dacier.*



BOOK XIX. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. .261

" Receive, she cries, your royal daughter's son ;  
" And name the blessing that your pray'rs have  
    won."

476

Then thus the hoary Chief, " My victor arms  
" Have aw'd the realms around with dire alarms :  
" A sure memorial of my dreaded fame  
" The boy shall bear ; *Ulysses* be his name ! 480

[. 476. " *Receive, she cries, your royal daughter's son, &c.* ] We have here an antient custom observed by the Greeks : the child was placed by the father upon the grandfather's knees, as a token that a grandchild was the most agreeable present that a son could make to a father. That this was an antient custom is evident from the *Iliad*.

— — — τυγερᾶς δ' ἐπεκέκλετ' Ἐφινῆς  
Μήπολε γένασιν οῖσιν ἴφεσσεσθαι φίλοι νιὸι  
Ἐξ ἐμέθει γεγάντα — — —

That is, the father of *Phœnix* imprecated the furies, that *Phœnix* might never have a son to place upon his grandfather's knees.

It has been already remarked that it was customary in *Greece* for the parents to name the child ; here the grandfather names *Ulysses* : but this is done by permission of the parents, for *Autolycus* bids them give the name.

Γαυλέρος ἐμὸς Συγάντη τε τίθεται ὄνομα.

*Ulysses* was called Ὀδυσσεὺς, from Ὁδύσσω, *Irascor* ; implying (says *Eustathius*) that many hated, or were enraged at, *Autolycus*, for the mischiefs he had done by his art in war, ἐν τῷ μίσθῳ διὰ κλεπτοτύπην : that is in other words, *Autolycus* called *Ulysses* Ὀδυσσεὺς from the terror he had been to his enemies.



## 262 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xix.

“ And when with filial love the youth shall  
    “ come  
“ To view his mother’s soil, my *Delpwick* dome }  
“ With gifts of price shall send him joyous }  
    “ home.” }

Lur’d with the promis’d boon, when youthful  
prime

Ended in man, his mother’s natal clime          485

*Ulysses* sought ; with fond affection dear  
*Amphithea*’s arms receiv’d the royal heir :

Her antient \* Lord an equal joy possest ;  
Instant he bade prepare the genial feast :          489

A steer to form the sumptuous banquet bled,  
Whose stately growth five flow’ry summers fed :  
His sons divide, and roast with artful care  
The limbs ; then all the tasteful viands share.

Nor ceas’d discourse (the banquet of the soul) }  
‘Till *Phæbus* wheeling to the western goal          495 }

Resign’d the skies, and night involv’d the pole.  
Their drooping eyes the slumb’rous shade opprest,  
Sated they rose, and all retir’d to rest.

\* *Autolycus.*



BOOK XIX. HOMER's ODYSSEY. 263

Soon as the morn, new-rob'd in purple light,  
Pierc'd with her golden shafts the rear of night ;  
*Ulysses*, and his brave maternal race 501

The young *Autolyci*, assay the chace.

*Parnassus*, thick perplex'd with horrid shades,  
With deep-mouth'd hounds the hunter-troop  
invades ;

What—time the sun, from ocean's peaceful stream,  
Darts o'er the lawn his horizontal beam. 506

The pack impatient snuff the tainted gale ;  
The thorny wilds the wood-men fierce assail :

And foremost of the train, his cornel spear  
*Ulysses* wav'd, to rouse the savage war. 510

Deep in the rough recesses of the wood,  
A lofty copse, the growth of ages, stood :  
Nor winter's boreal blast, nor thund'rous show'r,  
Nor solar ray, cou'd pierce the shady bow'r,  
With wither'd foliage strew'd, a heapy store ! 515  
The warm pavilion of a dreadful boar.

Rous'd by the hounds and hunters mingling  
cries,

The savage from his leafy shelter flies :



264 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xix.

With fiery glare his sanguine eye-balls shine,  
And bristles high impale his horrid chine. 520

Young *Ithacus* advanc'd, defies the foe,  
Poising his lifted lance in aët to throw ;  
The savage renders vain the wound decreed,  
And springs impetuous with opponent speed !  
His tusks oblique he aim'd, the knee to gore ;  
Aslope they glanc'd, the sinewy fibres tore, 526  
And bar'd the bone : *Ulysses* undismay'd,  
Soon with redoubl'd force the wound repay'd ;  
To the right shoulder-joint the spear apply'd :  
His further flank with streaming purple dy'd :  
On earth he rush'd with agonizing pain ; 531  
With joy, and vast surprise, th' applauding  
train

View'd his enormous bulk extended on the plain.  
With bandage firm *Ulysses* knee they bound ;  
Then chanting mystick lays, the closing wound

\* 535. *Then chanting mystick lays, the closing wound  
Of sacred melody confess'd the force.* }

This is a remarkable instance of the antiquity of that idle superstition of curing wounds by incantation or charms : yet *Homer* is no way blameable for mentioning it ; he wrote according to the opinion of the age, which whether true or



## BOOK XIX. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 265

Of sacred melody confess'd the force ; 536  
The tides of life regain'd their azure course.

false vindicates him as a Poet. Indeed almost all other Poets have spoken more boldly than *Homer* of the power of incantations ; thus *Virgil*,

“ *Carmina vel cœlo possunt deducere lunam,*  
“ *Carminibus Circe socios mutavit Ulysseni,*  
“ *Frigidus in pratis cantando rumpitur anguis.”*

But we may defend *Homer* from *Pliny*, who has thought this point, viz. whether charms are available physically, worthy of a serious discussion ; he refers to this passage in his natural History, lib. xxviii. cap. 1. *Dixit Homerus profluviū sanguinis vulnerato femine Ulyssen inhibuisse carmine : Theophrastus, Ischiadicos sanare : Cato prodidit Luxatis membris carmen auxiliari, Varro ; Podagris. Attatus affirms, that if a man chance to spy a scorpion, and pronounce the word *duo*, it will lie still, and never shoot his sting.* I think these grave Authors outdo even the fictions of Poets ; and I hardly believe that any of them would have ventured to provoke a serpent trusting to the charm. But we are to understand this charm not merely as a form of words, but as joined with musical notes, and then it may appear more rational : for the cure of the Sciatica, *Theophrastus* commends the *Phrygian* musick, and *A. Gellius* for giving ease to it ; but adds, *ut Memoriae proditum est. Apollonius* in his book *de Miris*, affirms from *Theophrastus*, that Musick cures many diseases both of mind and body, *καθάπτει λεπτοθυμίας, φθεγγει, καὶ τὰς ἵππου μακρὸν γιγνομένας τῆς διατάξεως ἐντάσεις. ιατρεῖς δὲ κατατίθησι; ισχιαδεῖ καὶ ἐπιληψίαν.* And the same Author affirms, that many in his time, especially the *Thebans*, used the pipe for the cure of several sicknesses, which *Galen* calls *κατατύλειν τὴς τόπες, super loco affecto tibiā canere ; or ioca dolentia decantare.* I will not affirm that such charms of musick have no power in soine maladies ; every one knows what an effect the harp of *David* had over the spirits of *Saul* ; but we have either lost, or not yet found out the art : a natural reason may



266 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book xix.

Then back they led the youth with loud acclaim ;  
*Autolycus*, enamour'd with his fame,  
Confirm'd the cure : and from the *Delpwick*  
dome

540

With added gifts return'd him glorious home.

He safe at *Ithaca* with joy receiv'd,  
Relates the chace, and early praise atchiev'd.

Deep o'er his knee inseam'd, remain'd the scar :  
Which noted token of the woodland war 545

When *Euryklea* found, th' ablusion ceas'd ;  
Down dropp'd the leg, from her slack hand releas'd ;

The mingled fluids from the vase redound ;  
The vase reclining floats the floor around !  
Smiles dew'd with tears the pleasing strife exprest  
Of grief, and joy, alternate in her breast. 551

be assigned for it ; for as the musical notes move the air, so the air moves the inward spirits, and the humours of the body, which are the seat of diseases ; so that by this new motion they may be condensed, rarified, dissipated or expelled, according as they are agitated or influenced by the concussion of the musical notes ; but however this be, if other Poets may say that charms have power to stop the rivers in their courses, Homer is not to be condemned for ascribing the power of stopping blood to incantations. See Mr. Cowley's Notes on the first book of his Davideis.



## BOOK XIX. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 267

Her flutt'ring words in melting murmurs dy'd ;  
At length abrupt—my son !—my King !—she  
cry'd.

His neck with fond embrace infolding fast,  
Full on the Queen her raptur'd eye she cast, 555  
Ardent to speak the Monarch safe restor'd :  
But studious to conceal her royal Lord,

¶. 553.—*abrupt—my son !—my King !—she cry'd.]*  
It may seem incredible that this dialogue between *Ulysses* and *Euryklea* could be held in the presence of *Penelope*, and *she* not hear it : how is this to be reconciled to probability ! I will answer in the words of *Eustathius* : The Poet, says he, is admirably guarded against this objection ; it is for this reason that he mentions the falling of *Ulysses*'s leg into the water, the sound of the vessel from that accident, the overturning of it, and the effusion of the water : all these different sounds may easily be supposed to drown the voice of *Euryklea*, so as it might not be heard by *Penelope* ; it is true, *she* could not but observe this confusion that happened while *Euryklea* washes ; but the age of *Euryklea* might naturally make her believe that all this happened by accident through her feebleness, and *Penelope* might be persuaded that it was thus occasioned, having no reason to suspect the truth : besides, what is more frequent on the Theatre than to speak to the audience, while the persons on the stage are supposed not to hear ? In reality, it is evident that *Ulysses* and *Euryklea* were at a proper distance from *Penelope*, probably out of decency while the feet were washing ; for as soon as that office is over, *Homer* tells us that *Ulysses* drew nearer to the fire where *Penelope* sat, that he might resume the conference.

Aῖτις ἀφ' ἀσποτίφῳ περὶδὸς ἐλκετό δίφρον Ὀδυσσεὺς.



268 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xix.

*Minerva* fix'd her mind on views remote,  
And from the present bliss abstracts her thought.  
His hand to *Euryklea*'s apply'd,                    560  
Art thou foredoom'd my pest? the Hero cry'd:  
Thy milky founts my infant lips have drain'd : }  
And have the Fates thy babling age ordain'd                    }  
To violate the life thy youth sustain'd ? }  
An exile have I told, with weeping eyes,                    565  
Full twenty annual suns in distant skies :  
At length return'd, some God inspires thy breast  
To know thy King, and here I stand confess.  
This heav'n-discover'd truth to thee consign'd,  
Reserve, the treasure of thy inmost mind :                    570  
Else if the Gods my vengeful arm sustain,  
And prostrate to my sword the Suitor-train :  
With their lewd mates, thy undistinguish'd age  
Shall bleed a victim to vindictive rage.                    574

Then thus rejoin'd the dame, devoid of fear :  
What words, my son, have pass'd thy lips severe?  
Deep in my soul the trust shall lodge secur'd ;  
With ribs of steel, and marble heart, immur'd.

\*. 577. *Deep in my soul the trust shall lodge secur'd.]* Plutarch in his treatise upon *Garrulity* observes, that Ulysses and every



BOOK XIX. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 269

When heav'n, auspicious to thy right avow'd,  
Shall prostrate to thy sword the Suitor-crowd ;  
**The deeds I'll blazon of the menial fair;** 581  
**The lewd to death devote, the virtuous spare.**

Thy aid avails me not, the Chief reply'd ;  
My own experience shall their doom decide ;  
A witness-judge precludes a long appeal : 585  
Suffice it thee thy Monarch to conceal.

He said : obsequious with redoubl'd pace,  
She to the fount conveys th' exhausted vase :  
The bath renew'd, she ends the pleasing toil  
With plenteous unction of ambrosial oil. 590

person that had relation to him were remarkable for their taciturnity : they had all profited under so great a master of secrecy as *Ulysses* : it is practised by his wife, his son, and his nurse ; his very companions, who attended him in his voyages, possessed this virtue in so eminent a degree as to suffer themselves to be dashed in pieces by the *Cyclops*, rather than discover him to that giant. The moral that we are to gather from this fable is, that the safety of Princes Counsels consists in secrecy. *Dacier.*

\*. 590. *With plenteous unction*—] We are not to imagine that this custom of anointing the feet was an instance of luxury ; it prevailed over the oriental world solely out of necessity, to avoid offensiveness in those hot regions. This custom prevailed many ages after *Homer*, and we have an instance of it in the woman who washed the feet of our Lord and Saviour with tears, and anointed them with oil. This place is a plain proof that oil was used after washing the feet as well as after bathing.



270 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xix.

Adjusting to his limbs the tatter'd vest,  
His former seat receiv'd the stranger guest ;  
Whom thus with pensive air the Queen addrest.]

Tho' night, dissolving grief in grateful ease,  
Your drooping eyes with soft oppression seize ;  
A-while, reluctant to her pleasing force, 596  
Suspend the restful hour with sweet discourse.

The day (ne'er brighten'd with a beam of joy !)  
My menials, and domestick cares employ :  
And, unattended by sincere repose, 600  
The night affests my ever-wakeful woes :  
When nature's hush'd beneath her brooding shade,  
My echoing griefs the starry vault invade.  
As when the months are clad in flow'ry green,  
Sad *Philomel*, in bow'ry shades unseen, 605

¶. 605. *Sad Philomel, &c.*] This passage is thus explained by *Eustathius*. The simile is not only introduced to express the sorrow of *Penelope*, but the nature of it : it is not so much intended to illustrate her grief, as her various agitations and different thoughts compared to the different accents in the mournful song of the nightingale ; for thus *Homer* applies it.

"Ως καὶ οἷοι δίχα θυμὸς ὀρώφεται εὐθεῖα καὶ εὐθεῖα.

*Eustathius* adds, that *Homer* relates this story very differently from later Authors : he mentions nothing of *Pegae*, *Tereus*, or *Pandion*, unless that name be the same with *Pandareus* ;



## BOOK XIX. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 271

To vernal airs attunes her varied strains ;  
And *Itylus* sounds warbling o'er the plains :  
Young *Itylus*, his parents darling joy ! ].  
Whom chance misled the mother to destroy : ]  
Now doom'd a wakeful bird to wail the beau- ]  
teous boy. ] 610

*Itylus* likewise is by them called *Itys*. The story is thus, according to these writers : *Philomela* was the wife of *Tereus* King of *Thrace*, she had a sister named *Progne*, whom *Tereus* ravished and cut her tongue out, that she might not discover the crime to *Philomela*; but *Progne* betrayed it by weaving the story in a piece of embroidery; upon this *Philomela* slew her own son *Itys* or *Itylus*, and served up his flesh to the table of her husband *Tereus*; which being made known to him, he pursues *Philomela* and *Progne*, who are feigned to be changed into birds for their swift flight into *Athens*, by which they escaped the revenge of *Tereus*. *Philomela* is fabled to be turned into a nightingale, and *Progne* into a swallow; it being observed by *Pausanias*, that no swallow ever builds in *Thrace*, or nightingale is ever seen there, as hating the country of *Tereus*. But *Homer* follows a different history : *Pandareus* son of *Merops* had three daughters, *Meropè*, *Cleothera*, and *Aëdon*: *Pandareus* married his eldest daughter *Aëdon* to *Zethus* brother of *Amphion*, mentioned in the eleventh *Odyssy*; she had an only sc named *Itylus*; and being envious at the numerous family per brother-in-law *Amphion*, she resolves to murder *Amphion*, the eldest of her nephews; her own son *Itylus* was brought up with the children of *Amphion*, and lay in the same bed with this *Amaleus*. *Aëdon* directs her son *Itylus* to absent himself one night from the bed, but he forgets her orders; at the time determined, she conveys herself into the apartment, and murthers her own son *Itylus*, by mistake, instead of her nephew *Amaleus*: upon this, almost in distraction, she begs the Gods to remove her from the race of humankind; they grant her prayer, and change her into a nightingale.



272 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xix.

So in nocturnal solitude forlorn,  
A sad variety of woes I mourn !  
My Mind reflective, in a thorny maze  
Devious from care to care incessant strays.  
Now, wav'ring doubt succeeds to long despair ;  
**Shall I my virgin-nuptial-vow revere ;**      616  
And joining to my son's my menial train,  
Partake his councils, and assist his reign !  
Or, since mature in manhood, he deplores  
His dome dishonour'd, and exhausted stores ;  
**Shall I, reluctant ! to his will accord ;**      621  
And from the Peers select the noblest Lord ;  
So by my choice avow'd, at length decide  
These wasteful love-debates, a mourning  
bride ?  
**A visionary thought I'll now relate,**      625  
Illustrate, if you know, the shadow'd fate.  
A team of twenty geese (a snow-whit 'ain !)  
Fed near the limpid lake with golden grain,  
Amuse my pensive hours. The bird of Jove  
Fierce from his mountain-eyrie downward  
drove ;      630



BOOK XIX. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 273

Each fav'rite fowl he pounc'd with deathful sway,  
And back triumphant wing'd his airy way.

Iy pitying eyes effus'd a plenteous stream,  
'o view their death thus imag'd in a dream :

With tender sympathy to soothe my soul, 635  
A troop of matrons, fancy-form'd, condole.

But whilst with grief and rage my bosom  
burn'd,

udden the tyrant of the skies return'd :  
Arch'd on the battlements he thus began,  
In form an eagle, but in voice a man.) 640

Queen ! no vulgar vision of the sky  
ome, prophetick of approaching joy :

W in this plamy form thy victor Lord ;

geese (a glutton race) by thee deplor'd,

end the Suitors fated to my sword. 645 }

the pleasing feather'd omen ceas'd.

the downy bands of sleep releas'd,

y the limpid lake my swan-like train

:d, infatiate of the golden grain.

649

he vision self-explain'd (the Chief replies)

ere reveals the sanction of the skies :



274 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xix.

*Ulysses* speaks his own return decreed ;  
And by his sword the Suitors sure to bleed.

Hard is the task, and rare, the Queen rejoin'd  
Impending destinies in dreams to find :      65  
Immur'd within the silent bow'r of *Sleep*,  
Two portals firm the various phantoms keep :

¶. 656. *Immur'd within the silent bow'r of sleep, &c.*] This seems to be a bold fiction, and Commentators have laboured hard to shew the reason of it : some imagine, that by the horn is meant a tunick of the eye, which is called horny ; and that the ivory represents the teeth ; and that by these allusions the Poet intended to express that what we hear spoke may be false, but what we see must infallibly be true : that according to this fable, the ivory gate emits falsehood, that horn, truth. Others explain *Homer* by referring to the *narration* of horn and ivory, horn being pervious to the sight, ivory impenetrable. *Dacier*, from *Eustathius*, gives us a different solution ; by horn, which is transparent, *H* means the air, or heavens which are translucent ; by it he denotes the earth which is gross and opaque : thus dreams which come from the earth, that is, through the of ivory, are false ; those from heaven, or through the of horn, true. But it may be thought that these grounds, from the words of *Homer*, for such a narration. I imagine that this fable is built upon a narration, and that there were places called the gates of falsehood and truth : *Diodorus Siculus*, in his second book, after the ceremonies concerning the dead, mentions the gates of oblivion, of hatred and lamentation ; and then adds, that there are other gates in the same place ; namely, in Egypt, in *Aegypt*, that are called the gates of verity, near which there is a statue of justice without an head ; now *Homer* in the twenty-fourth *Odyssey* places the region of dreams



BOOK XIX. HOMER's ODYSSEY. 275

I iv'ry one ; whence flit to mock the brain,  
A winged Lies a light fantastick train :  
N'e gate oppos'd pellucid valves adorn, 660  
T'd columns fair incas'd with polish'd horn :

W here images of truth for passage wait,  
A ith visions manifest of future fate.

E xt to this troop, I fear, that phantom soar'd,  
hich spoke *Ulysses* to his realm restor'd : 665  
S elusive semblance ! — But my remnant life  
eav'n shall determine in a gameful strife :  
t that fam'd now *Ulysses* taught to bend,  
me the rival archers shall contend.

on the listed field he us'd to place 670  
beams, oppos'd to six in equal space :

to the infernal shades, and it is past dispute that he bor-  
all these fables of *Styx*, *Cocytus*, (that is, of the gates  
of lamentation,) &c. from *Ægypt*, and places them in  
- *Orpheus*, who adapted all his ceremonies accord-  
- rites of burial observed at *Memphis*, as *Diodorus*  
: if therefore he borrows the fable of the gates of  
&c. from *Ægypt*, why may he not the story of the  
of falsehood and verity ? especially since he takes his  
ie relation concerning hell from the customs of the *Ægypt*,  
and this region of dreams is placed by him in the pas-  
to hell : it may therefore not be impossible but this story  
ie gates of sleep, may have a real foundation, and be  
upon the customs of the *Ægyptians*.



276 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book xix.

Elanc'd a-far by his unerring art,  
Sure thro' six circlets flew the whizzing dart.  
So, when the sun restores the purple day, 674  
Their strength and skill the Suitors shall assay :  
To him the spousal honour is decreed,  
Who thro' the rings directs the feather'd reed.  
Torn from these walls (where long the kinder  
pow'rs

With pomp and joy have wing'd my youthfu  
hours !

On this poor breast no dawn o 'bliss shall bear  
The pleasure past supplies a copious theme  
For many a dreary thought, and many a do-  
ful dream !

Propose the sportive lot, the Chief replie'  
Nor dread to name yourself the bowyer's p  
*Ulysses* will surprise th' unfinish'd game  
Avow'd, and falsify the Suitors' claim.

To whom with grace serene the Queen . . .  
In all thy speech what pleasing force I find !  
O'er my suspended woe thy words prevail,  
I part reluctant from the pleasing tale.



BOOK XIX. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 277

But heav'n that knows what all terrestrials need,  
Repose to night, and toil to day decreed :  
Grateful vicissitude ! Yet me withdrawn,  
Wakeful to weep and watch the tardy dawn  
Establish'd use enjoins ; to rest and joy      695  
Estrang'd, since dear *Ulysses* sail'd to *Troy* !  
Meantime instructed is the menial tribe  
Your couch to fashion as yourself prescribe.

Thus affable, her bow'r the Queen ascends ;  
The sov'reign-step a beauteous train attends ; 700  
(I here imag'd to her soul *Ulysses* rose ;  
Or own her pale cheek new-streaming sorrow  
Ic flows :

Vie'll soft oblivious shade *Minerva* spread,  
The'd o'er her eyes ambrosial slumber shed.

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This said

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Fa~~s~~, THE END OF THE FOURTH VOLUME.

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